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YOUR GUIDE TO CYBER CULTURE

Fall 1995
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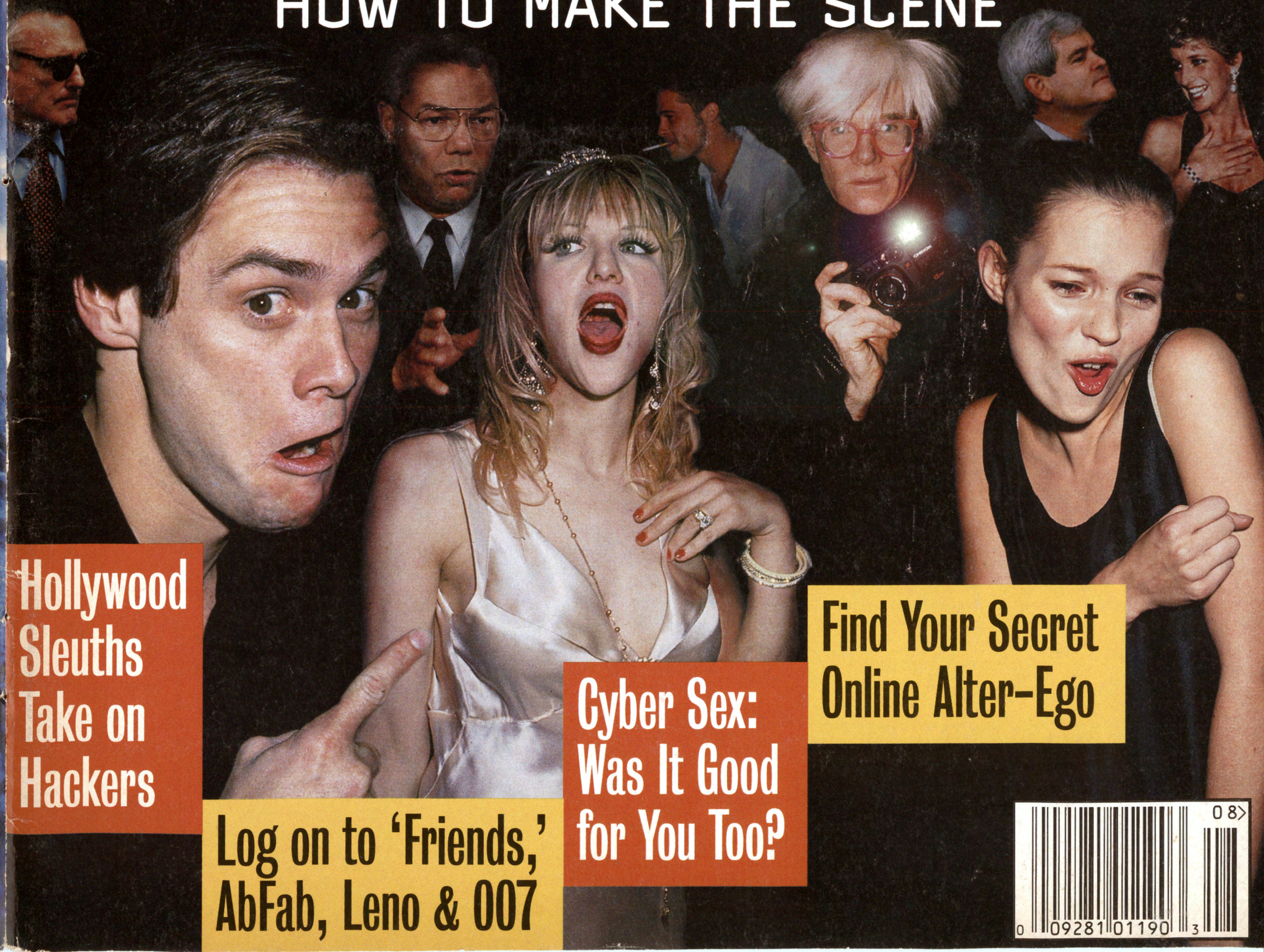

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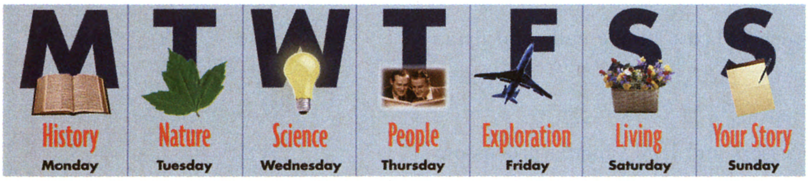
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VirtualCity

PREMIERE ISSUE

Fall 1995

FEATURES

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Online. Internet. World Wide Web. Cindy Crawford, Cindy Sherman. O.J. Simpson, Homer Simpson. Virtual? Reality? Pornography. Hype. Culture clash. Cyberculture. **Bill Barol** dives head-first into the sometimes wondrous, sometimes worthless new territory known as the Virtual City.

36 My So-Called Life Online

He's not expecting the Internet to transform his life, just to make it a little better. **Don Steinberg** has mastered the trick of using the online world as a useful, everyday tool, kind of like a microwave.

41 Real Life, Real People, Real Places—Online

What do a well-known psychologist, a teenage skateboarder and the most dangerous men in comedy have in common? They've moved in to the Virtual City. Find out where they go and what they get out of it. And check out the best sites for Health, Money, Travel, Kids, Home, Sports and Fun.

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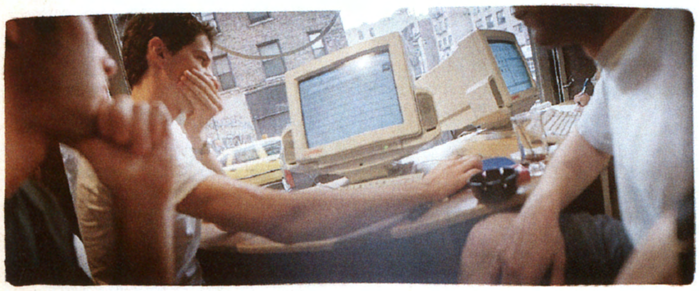

TOP: SUZANNE OPTON; BOTTOM: KRISTINE LARSEN

Latté at 28.8 kbps: Cruising the Net at the Cyber Café

GUIDE TO THE VIRTUAL CITY

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Cover Composite by Oliver Wasow PICTURE CREDITS FOR COVER: LEFT TO RIGHT, FRONT ROW: RON GALELLA, LISA O'CONNOR/ACE/SHOOTING STAR, KATHY BANKS/SYGMA; BACK ROW: RON GALELLA, JAMES COLBURN/PHOTO REPORTERS, GWENYTH PALTROW/GALELLA, GREG MATHIESON/SYGMA, JAMES COLBURN/PHOTOREPORTERS, SYGMA

From the Editors

Consider this: On an average day almost anywhere in the world, you can connect by computer to the greatest minds in science, world-class comedians or experts on medieval art. You can phone home from 32,000 feet above Yosemite or from your tractor in the middle of 100 acres of Iowa corn. You can hang out online with Michael Jackson or Michael Milken. You can find a crowd of people who, like you, collect 18th-century thumbtacks. You can make out.

Technology is redefining how you make friends, how you communicate, what you know and who you are. It's the foundation of the Virtual City.

With a computer hooked to a telephone line you can move right in. The Virtual City is a distinctly human place, rich with culture, with opportunity, with things to do and people to see. It's as glamorous as the Miracle Mile and as perilous as a deserted alley, teeming with winners and losers, lovers and haters, geniuses and fools. Take the right turn and you find the Louvre. Take the wrong turn and you land in a place where thugs steal your credit cards. It's the place where Rush Limbaugh found a wife and Tom Clancy lost one.

This magazine treats the interactive world as a place where all of us belong. It's a guidepost, a guiding light, a guidebook to take on your forays into the cluttered electronic streets. It's designed to give you a sense of place, a sense of purpose, and to urge you to participate. We decry the belief of some fringe geek groups that the interactive world is for radicals and nerds. That idea is as outdated as the notion that men don't do dishes. If you doubt that, you need go no farther than the closest screen for proof that you're wrong. And we're not just talking about a computer screen. On every nightly TV newscast, you'll see an Internet address you can visit for more information on what's happening in your world.

The interactive world—the *Virtual City*—is a place of people and of ideas. Everything out there is familiar to you, because it is human. Some of it you'll like. Some of it you'll hate. All of it honestly reflects who we are and what we're becoming.

So—Welcome. This premiere issue of *Virtual City* is the work of a team of magazine editors, writers and business people. Feel free to email, fax, call or even snail-mail us. Please fill out the reader-response card we've bound in to let us know how we're doing. We'd love to know what you think.

See you in Issue 2.

Jonathan Sacks

Jonathan Sacks, PUBLISHER & EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Lewis D'Vorkin, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

VirtualCity

Vol. 1, Issue 1

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HERE TODAY, GONE TOMORROW: The online world is constanly in flux. All site addresses were current at the time the Quark™ files were saved. Happy surfing.

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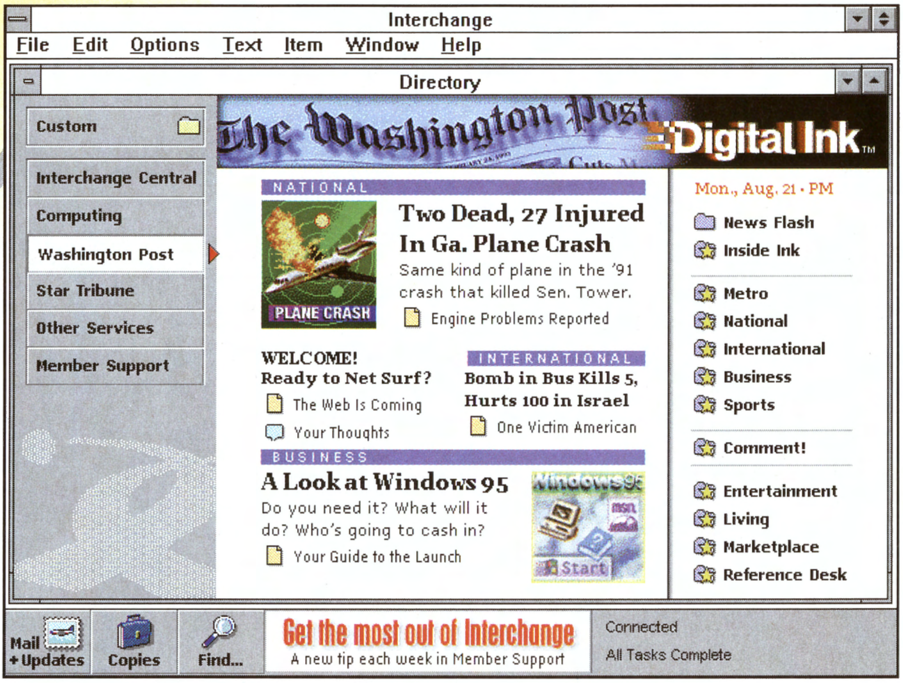
MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 1995

12:40 p.m.	Atlantic Southeast Airlines commuter plane crashes
1:10 p.m.	Rescuers arrive at the scene
1:30 p.m.	FAA officials arrive at the scene
1.37 p.m.	**Digital Ink** begins publishing online coverage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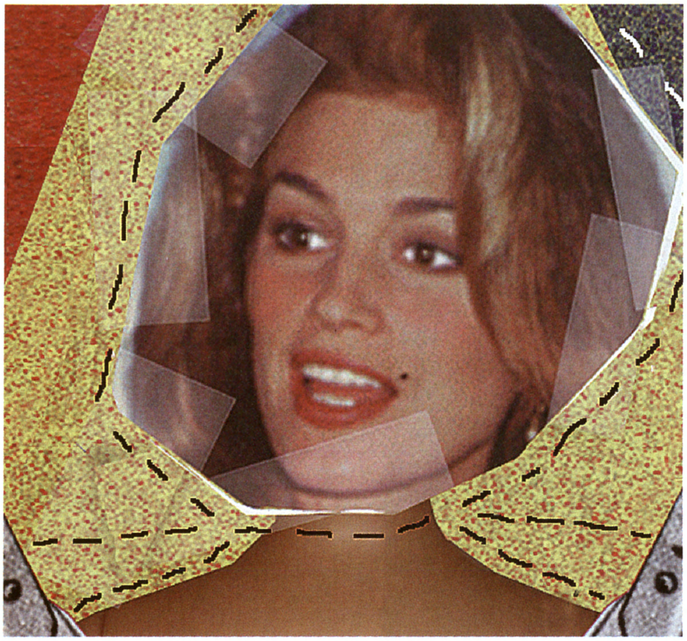


Cut and "Pasties": On the voyeuristic Staircase web page, celebrities appear unclothed in digitally altered shower scenes.

Snip 'n Clip Scars The Superstars

By Nikki Finke

ONLINE. OR OUT OF LINE. You be the judge. An actress appeared nude in a movie; suddenly, her peekaboo poses show up on the Internet. Some hacker with a scanner thinks its cool to post a computer composite that puts a famous star's head on someone else's naked torso. An adoring fan creates unauthorized home pages loaded with flimsy gossip, intimate details and GIF pictures about an actor.

Now Hollywood is beginning to byte back. Media figures who feel used and abused by the Internet are hiring a new breed of outside consultants, or "cybersleuths," to seek out and destroy offensive posted material. Their job: to find the sites that publish real or faked nude client photos (known in netspeak as "pasties"), delete the images and then track down the responsible parties. Then, the lawyers step in with a cease-and-desist letter warning of legal consequences. Hollywood publicist Larry Winokur advocates tech-toughness. "My clients abhor any loss of control over their images, and our job is to maintain as much control as possible."

But *can* they when anyone with a modem can publish on the world's largest vanity press? One top consulting firm on safety and privacy for celebrities closely monitors the web for its clients. "I think that famous people, while they may not be the only targets of criminality on the Internet, certainly are the most vulnerable," said Gavin de Becker, founder of the Studio City, Calif.-based firm of the same name. "Information about them has value to others—even when it's untrue."

Mere gossip or unkind references are ignored. But de Becker's cybersleuths do care deeply about doctored or stolen photographs, libelous information, copyright infringement as well as anything else that might endanger or embarrass a public figure. "One thing we've learned is that the people committing some of these offenses on the Internet also commit them in other ways and through other media," de Becker notes. "In several cases, it has led us to people who were involved in illegal and unethical exploitation of clients, and those are the ones we pursue most aggressively."

AOL, Prodigy and other commercial services adhere to each star's strict approvals process for photos. But celebrities have little or no control over who posts what on the web. Typical is the fan who, clearly looking for attention from MTV-VJ Kennedy, dedicated a home page to "her wit, her intelligence and her nice booty…I want us to go rollerskating." Nor did Alicia Silverstone, Markie Post, Mariah Carey, Daisy Fuentes, Tiffani Amber-Thiessen, Christina Applegate, Marcia Clark, Hillary Clinton or Barbara Bush have a say when pasties of them began appearing. (To a lesser degree, men are also victimized: Mel Gibson, Richard Gere, Keanu Reeves and Brad Pitt have been spotted online with their pants down.)

"How do we control it?" worries Don Buckley, online movie marketer for Warner Bros. "It's technology. You can't get the genie back in the bottle." Or can you?

Nikki Finke *[nikkifinke@ aol.com], is West Coast Editor of* Virtual City. *Her book* Pay or Play: The Rise and Rise of the Hollywood Agent *will be published by Dial.*

NAKEDONLINE

Man oh Man oh Pam… The Baywatch babe is all over the web in the altogether (including x-rated MPEGs on "Pamwatch"). Jump to Motley Crue's home page for a sound clip from Pam and Tommy Lee's answering machine.

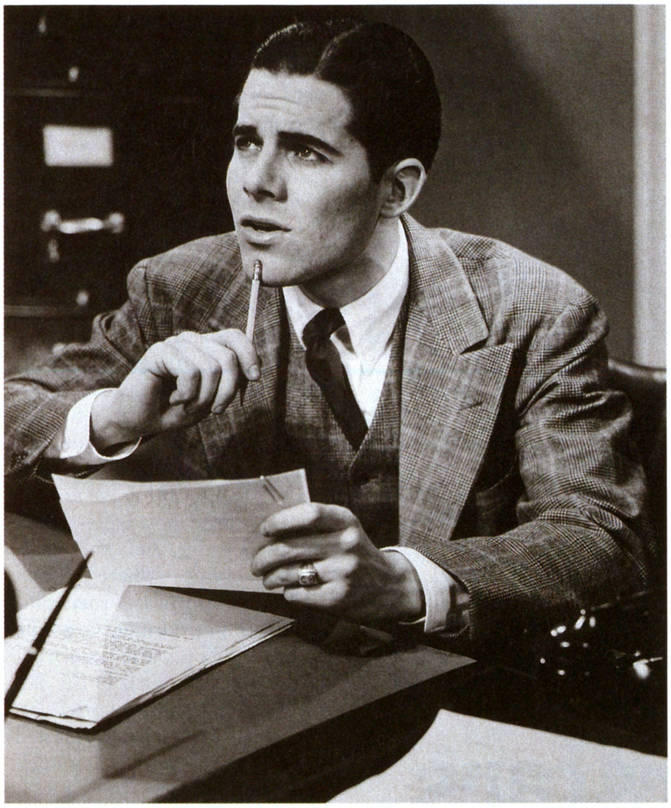
Sexiest Man Online?… It was time someone put up a male page. So here he is, with lots of pin-up shots. "Brad Pitt is adored for two reasons (besides his acting ability)—his smile and his stomach," says the shrine's author.

Guess Who? Drew!… "Just the rampant ramblings of one completely devoted to the worship of Drew," gushes the page designer. Bare tops and bare bottoms in The House of Drew, where it's always a beautiful day in the neighborhood.

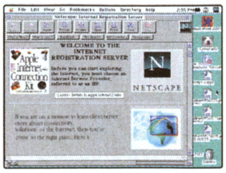
TOP TO BOTTOM: M. GERBER/LGI; PACHA/LGI; JIM SMEAL/RON GALELLA

Illustration by David Plunkert

You think a web site is something that needs to be dusted.
You think a Gopher is the state animal of Minnesota.
You think Fetch is something that Rover does.



Have we got an Internet kit for you.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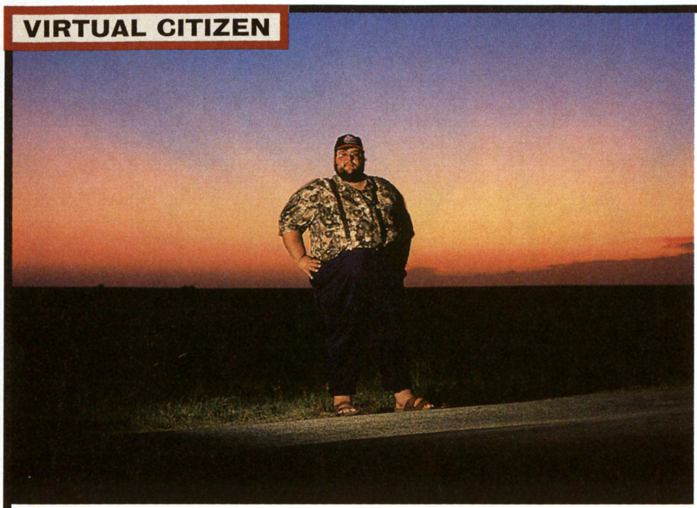

Dean Hughson He went to the big D (we don't mean Dallas).

He Got the Pickup, She Got the Palace

Ask Dean Hughson about divorce. He'll talk and talk. And when he's done talking, he'll fill your email box with messages—things he forgot to mention, nuances he wants to make clear and updates on his life.

It doesn't matter that Hughson's divorce was final four years ago. The 44-year-old lost custody of his three kids and moved to northern Missouri. Now he's happily remarried, lives on a 240-acre farm and makes a very good living selling powdered eggs to packaged food companies.

Yet the pain of losing everything he'd ever had is still there. At least the memory of the pain is there. A helping kind of guy, ex-parole officer and substance abuse counselor, Hughson couldn't stand to see other people suffer the way he had without doing something about it. He declared himself the defender of the divorced, a portly Jewish Mother Teresa with a keyboard, ready to dole out advice and virtual hankies.

Thousands of people a month flock to Hughson's Divorce Home Page *{http://www.primenet.com/~dean/}*, an electronic manifesto that's part call to arms and part resource guide, mixed with liberal doses of humor and common sense.

"It's like an AA meeting, teaching people to take responsibility," he says.

Hughson rises at 4 a.m. to answer email and spends about 40 hours a week searching, researching and talking online—all for free. He even keeps a spare bedroom available for strangers who want a real shoulder to cry on. Hughson calls what he's doing payback for everyone who helped him through the chaos of his own breakup.

"If this were terrible, emotionally, and kept reminding me of my divorce I wouldn't do it," he says. "But it's an opportunity to use a skill that I have.

"I'll only quit when there are no issues left to be solved, when there's information available easily and when men and women are treated equally in the courtroom."—**Michelle Rafter** *[michelleRV@aol.com]*

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DO IT YOURSELF
Start or respond to a California divorce through **Legal.Net** *{http://www.legal.net:80/divorce.htm}*; you can fill out all the necessary preliminary paperwork online. Fee for completion of forms, $75.

CRY ME A RIVER
Trade war stories, shed tears and exchange moral support with others who have been there at **alt.support.divorce**, a Usenet newsgroup devoted to divorce topics.

15 MILLISECONDS OF FAME

Ira Zimmerman: The Anti-Stern

Reliability engineer. Age 54. San Juan Capistrano, Calif. Online since 1992. Member of National Stuttering Project. **Claim to Fame:** Suspended by Prodigy after Howard Stern fans griped he criticized their idol. Forced Prodigy to set up a Stern "debate" board. **Quote:** "Howard said I ought to be allowed to express my views—no matter how idiotic...." *{On Prodigy, jump Radio BB, Howard Stern Debate}*

Amy Goodloe: Feminist Friend

Former English teacher. Age 27. Oakland, Calif. Online since 1993. Has a Celtic rose tummy tattoo. **Claim to Fame:** Launched Women's Resources on the Web and manages net mailing lists for net feminists. Also teaches women how to go online and create web pages. **Quote:** "I hate the hype about women being harassed on the Net. This is one of the most level playing fields ever."*{http://www.best.com/~agoodloe/home.html}*

THE ANDY WARHOL MUSEUM (2)

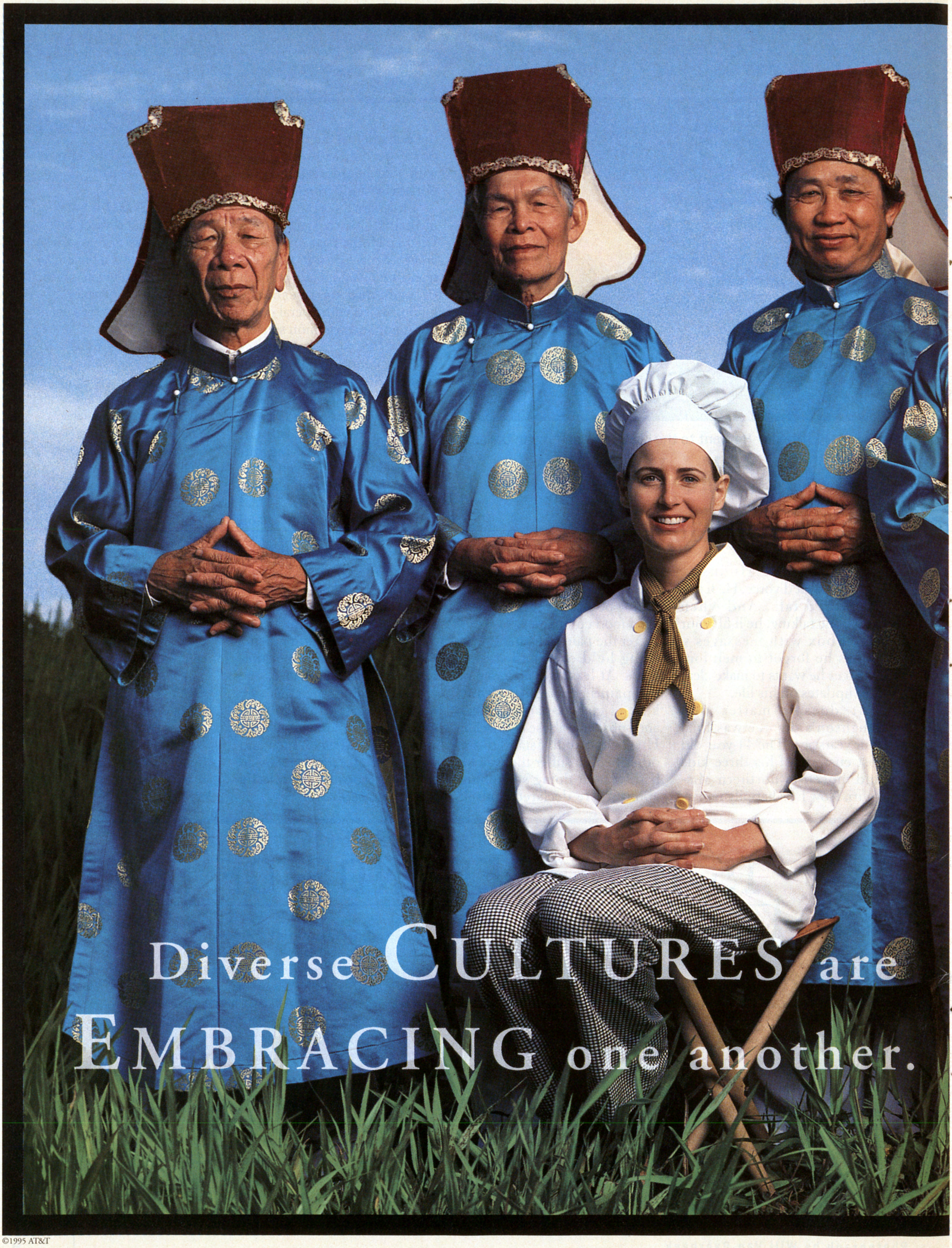
Mary Bruno: The Ms. of Mr. Showbiz

Online journalist. Age 43. Seattle. Online since 1994. Addicted to soap "One Life to Live." **Claim to Fame:** Writes the "Scoop" gossip column for Starwave's Mr. Showbiz site. Beats the tabloids for tidbits about celebrities. **Quote:** "I don't think Madonna is too thrilled with me. But I've really pissed off supermodel Vendela's people." *{http://web3.starwave.com/showbiz/scoop/}*

D. "Purvis" Mirsky: What, Me Complain?

Fledgling humorist. Age 27. Boston. Online since 1991. Makes his mom knit in front of MTV. **Claim to Fame:** Founded Mirsky's Worst of the Web. Has created some of the most hilariously wicked web pages. **Quote:** "People were getting sick of wading through useful stuff to get to the real crap." *{http://mirsky.turnpike.net:80/wow/Worst.html}*

Photograph by Will Van Overbeek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Latte or cream? Order please! AH, Connection! AH, Caffeine!

Gurgle hiss click — borders seize? (Howl) Correspection—Devils Bean?
Black magic madness (Ones and Os) Starving hysterical naked Ohs
and (one sand doze and once a nose
and me in the windows once was dreamed
by you in the who-knows-where wind—Oh,
say can you sing by the cybersynaptic light)?
AH, CONFECKSHUN! AH, CAF.FIEND!

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bloodsparks jumping

YES! CONNECTION! YES! CAFFEINE! YES!
YOU HAVE MAIL.
YES!!!

Apologies to A.G. from **Carol Day**

Cafés Near You

Cambridge, Mass.: Cybersmith, 617-547-8588. **London:** Cyberia, 44-171-2090983. **New York:** @Cafe, 212-979-5439; Cyber Café, 212-334-5140; Internet Cafe, 212-614-0747. **Seattle:** Speak-easy, 206-728-9770. **San Francisco:** Icon Byte Bar & Grill, 415-861-2983; **Toronto:** Eek-A-Geek, 416-962-0893. **Discover others around the world** at the Cyber Café Guide *{http://www.easynet.co.uk/pages/cafe/ccafe.htm}*.

www.there.has.got.to .be.a.better_way.com

Hang out in any coffeehouse and you'll hear young hipsters spewing a kind of new-age Esperanto: "So I went hottop slash-slash tripdub dot argle dot bargle dot com slash fooferaw, and, man, was it lame." Now, kids talking in a foreign language is nothing new, but unlike "phat" or "hoover" this is something you need to know: **how to speak URL.** Universal Resource Locators—those fiendish net addresses that force you to explore previously uncharted areas of your keyboard in search of tildes and underscore marks—are the nine-digit zip codes of the Nineties: inscrutable, inevitable, impossible to remember. And everywhere. In back windows of cars where alma maters used to be, scrolling across the bottom of your TV screen in place of flood warnings, even on your favorite bulletin board, where you'll see one flamer tell another "Hey, half-wit, go http://www.**get.bent**/." Unfortunately, ubiquitous doesn't mean easy. "If I have to enter in the address, I don't go," says one veteran hyper-texter. We've done our part to make your life online a little simpler: You can get to any of the Web sites *{always found in these keen curly braces}* in *Virtual City* through hot links on our home page *{http://www.virtcitnow.com}*. Happy hopping.—**Shyamala Reddy**

ADDICTIONALERT

Does this sound like a typical day at your computer? You eat lunch with one hand, type with the other, mouse with your elbow, cradle the phone in your neck and grab pencils with your toes—all so you won't interrupt a fiery chat argument about body piercing being the folk art of our times with some guy nicknamed "jackhammer."

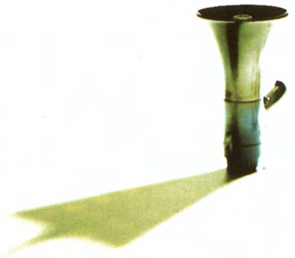
Yes? Then it's time to admit you're an **online addict. C'mon. Confess.** It's good for the cybersoul. It's not your fault: Almost anything can become an obsession, and being online is no exception. But you might have the beginnings of a serious problem. Take this test to find out.

You know you're addicted when...

1. **The only way** your dog can get you to take him out for a walk is if he sets up his own home page.
2. **You have so many** online accounts the postman delivers your Visa bill in a John Deere earthmover.
3. **You put a bed,** a microwave and a cappucino maker by the PC but your family draws the line at a Port-o-Potty.
4. **You think you're popular** but your friends all have names like Yahoo, Lycos and Prodigy Member Services.
5. **You keep typing** on chat til your fingers bleed, so you use the spacebar as a bandaid.

Fear not. Help is on the way. If you're just looking to whine, commiserate on the Webaholics Home Page *{http://www.ohiou.edu/~rbarrett/webaholics/ver2/index.html}*. Or just say no and start your own "Online Anonymous" support group. Better yet, get away from the computer altogether and see if you still have legs. —**Nikki Finke**

Photograph by Kristine Larsen



Mere Anarchy Loosed Upon the World

BETTER WATCH OUT. SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ONLINE AND you, your kids, even your grandma are all in danger of becoming sexual deviants or militia members. Or haven't you heard? The Internet is our greatest public enemy. Going online leads us into temptation. It makes us evil. A bit hyperbolic? How else to explain the kind of thinking behind an improperly reported cover story in *Time* on the lurking threat of kiddie cyber-porn. Or a *USA Today* story about the dissemination of fertilizer bombs on Usenet. Or the spectacle of James Exon and his cronies decrying uncensored online exchanges from the Senate floor.

We're in the midst of an ideological war against free thought, self-education and the unfettered human will. And who better to judge our rapid descent into hell on earth than nazi-hunters? They've seen it before, they should recognize it again, right? At the ever-vigilant Simon Weisenthal Center, researchers say Internet traffic concerning white supremacy and bomb-making doubled in the weeks before the attack on the Federal Building in Oklahoma City. According to Rabbi Abraham Cooper, the Internet "makes available things that used to be underground and puts it center stage." So, if we're to follow his logic, the Internet somehow made bomb-making more central to our cultural conversation, and thus more likely to happen.

Not so. On the Internet there is no center stage. Everything is equally accessible. If anything, there is a lack of focus and guidance. We don't have Dan Rather telling us where to go or what to access. In fact, the only palpable push in any direction is toward new Internet search tools that allow us to decide where we want to go. Perhaps it's porn. Maybe it's militia news. More likely, it's a site to help us cope with our new-found freedom of choice.

> **ON THE INTERNET THERE IS NO CENTER STAGE. EVERYTHING IS EQUALLY ACCESSIBLE. WE DON'T HAVE DAN RATHER TELLING US WHERE TO GO. WE MAKE THOSE CHOICES.**

Mainstream media *do* have a center stage, however, one that sensationalizes the sickest of the cultural interactions surrounding our disasters. After the Oklahoma bombing, all three network newscasts carried stories about bomb-making information online. And two weeks after the horror, local stations in New York led their newscasts on the same evening with New Jersey teenagers who got injured making a pipe bomb from information they got online. See? Online services turned school kids into terrorists. That is, until the pyrotechnically inclined students fessed up: They had heard about bomb information online by watching television news. (Only CNN, too often blasted for editorial promiscuity, told of people creating web sites to aid families of the victims in the Oklahoma blast.)

Luckily for us, though, even the mainstream media that promulgate our most conspiratorial visions are undergoing a revision. It's becoming more like the Internet every day, with more channels to choose from and more ways to feed back our thoughts—even if only by surfing away from what bores or irritates us. Will 500 cable channels and thousands of Net forums segment our culture into isolated garrisons of irreconcilable ideologies? If anything, participating in the increasingly complex media-space inspires tolerance. That's why the Internet spawns so many self-determining agendas.

The Internet, by its very design, promotes anarchy; no single computer is more important than any other. We all talk in the same size ASCII text. Members of various sectors, like Usenet newsgroups, do not feel "allegiance" to their communities in the traditional sense, because there is no institutional patriotism or hierarchical structure to look up to. People are free to develop a kinship to others in the community with which they participate. These are non-geographic localities, without the hollow allegiance of arbitrarily disempowered lessers to their equally arbitrarily appointed authority figures. In an environment where self-expression is built-in, those who work against progress stand out as detrimental to the common cause.

Today's interactive media expose our culture's most closeted dust-bunnies. They aren't always pretty. When they appear on the Internet, they fight for survival like genes in a population. Ideas are considered, debated and distributed as long as they are of value or interest. Anything fed into the system gets bigger and bigger until it makes a loud noise—like the feedback of a microphone—or smaller and smaller until it disappears.

The Net is now big and fast enough to be our culture's chief method of self-regulation and evolution. It's out of anyone's control. Slowing it down with censorship and fear will deprive us of its progressive role. The scary thing about the Internet is finding out what the darkest forces have been saying all along, and then being forced to confront the issues fomenting their depravity.

And just to keep the record straight, the FBI says most bomb-makers get their information from books available at army-navy stores or the public library—and published by the U.S. Government.

Douglas Rushkoff *{http://www.interport.net/~rushkoff} is the author of* Cyberia, Media Virus *and the forthcoming* Children of Chaos.

GARY HUSH

VIRTUAL CITIZENS

Music Pen A grand piano. Space for 'blading. Ping and Philip's aerie.

Play Music, Eat Sushi, Find Joy!

YOU CAN CATCH A HEADY DOSE OF CREATIVITY in the rarefied atmosphere above Union Square West in New York City. That's the enchanted world of the multimedia production company Music Pen—and its husband-and-wife creators, Dr. Philip Lui and Yee-Ping Wu. It's a long way from Shanghai, where as a seven-year-old Ping played concert piano for Mao and Khrushchev. It seems remote even from Julliard, where Ping, company president, and Philip, mastermind of its music composition software, met as students. It's also a far cry from their apartment a few blocks West, where until last year T-shirt-clad artists labored elbow-to-elbow at color-splashed screens, on which the sushi-eating penguin Lenny cavorted. Soon everyone at Music Pen will eat Lenny-style: Ping plans to build a sushi-bar for the 15,000-square-foot loft where 60 people gather day and night to make award-winning multimedia, and to have fun. Fun is what Ping believes is the key to Music Pen's success. "It's our last laugh on the world. This business allows us to be creative and have fun too." She admits that their work demands discipline, but advises, "Don't let go of your imagination."—**Carol Day** *{cday@echonyc.com}*

BEN STEIN'S AMAZING ONLINE ADVENTURES

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT

Midnight. No, after midnight. I am doing my usual late night thing at **Morton's,** where I've seen my usual quotient of famous men and women. I'm online, looking up who among them has the most total bathrooms at all their dwellings in the state of California.... **Hmmm.** My former agent, mentor and friend, the Hollywood titan, **Michael Ovitz,** has eight bathrooms in his house in the city and three at his beach house. This is going to be hard to beat. Bruce Willis, five at the beach and three at his home on Mulholland Drive. Modest, I say. Not that he was at Morton's, but I see Lowell Milken, Michael's billionaire brother, has four bathrooms at the beach and seven at his house in Brentwood (tying Michael Ovitz).... **One a.m.** A call from my bride of a mere 27 years. She wants to know about someone named Bernie Carl. Turns out her college roommate, the celebrity assistant D.A. in Manhattan, Linda Fairstein, is going to Europe on a lavish trip paid for by a guy named Bernie Carl. "Who is he? I know you can find out." **Click, click, click.** Yes, indeed. Bernie Carl. Just a partner of the Bass brothers, those very rich financiers from Texas. I called my wife back. "I'm sorry to report that he's the real McCoy. Really loaded." So much of what I do on the computer confirms that other people have made it....Hmmm. Speaking of which, I wonder how many times a tough guy like **Bruce Willis** has been sued in the city and county of Los Angeles. Zero, says the unblinking screen. What about my nemesis, **Michael R. Milken?** Wow! Jackpot. Forty-seven lawsuits against him in the past ten years in Los Angeles alone.... Time for bed.... **Tuesday. Early in the morning.** I'm in a chat room about boats, because I'm thinking my new boat in Idaho will cost me $1,000 every time I take it out to catch a fish worth $1.50 at **Safeway.** A man in one room says, "A boat is a hole in the water you throw money into." Another one offers the cheery advice, "If it flies or floats, rent it, don't buy it." ...**Ahh, a message for me on America Online.** Maybe better news. "Here it is, Ben. Enjoy it." I download the message. It was a photo of a stunning woman with impressive physical characteristics. Along with it was a note attached from a woman who once lived in my building: "If you would like a date with **Monika,** who is the former *Playboy* Playmate for Holland, email me at (a secret address) and she's all yours. Cost, $300." That is truly a fantasy. My Sea Trixie, a 20-foot Thompson, has taken all my discretionary money. Better to have some email palaver with a policeman and philosopher pal of mine in Cape Coral, Florida. "I just arrested a woman who had called in to tell about a thief who had broken into her waterfront home, stolen her TV and put one of her prize, **heavily insured kittens** into a microwave and fried it to a crisp. It just didn't seem right to me, so I took her aside and told her I had problems with her story. We couldn't find any prints but hers on the microwave. Finally, she confessed. She had faked the whole thing, and **murdered** her kitten to collect the insurance money. Doesn't it make you glad that you have a boat?" Yes, it does—to take me to a secluded cove called Whiskey Rock. And of course, I have **LEXIS,** so I can check on every guy who sails into the lagoon. I want to know who I'm dealing with. There are a lot of weird people out there.

Ben Stein *{ben stein@aol.com}, a writer/actor, lives in Los Angeles.*

Photograph by Ken Schles

WHAT'S UP IN THE VIRTUAL CITY

uplist

1 **Supermodels** are spreading like kudzu in cyberspace. Fed up with supermodelmania, "Sooty" posts wisdom "from the mouths of babes" on the Web *{http://www.sils.umich.edu/~sooty/thoughts.html}*. Paulina's confession is typical: "When I model, I'm pretty blank. You can't think too much or it doesn't work."

01: MELBOURNE FLIGHT
CANCELLED-NEW FLIGHT
#697 AT 5:25 PM 11/4/94
3:23 PM
MOTOROLA
ADVISOR

2 Street style turned every employee's nightmare—the electronic beeper—into rebel fashion. **Alphanumeric pagers** such as Motorola's Advisor, which displays four lines of text, upgrade this commodity fetish.

3 **Reboot,** TV's first entirely computer-animated cartoon *{Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. EST, ABC}*, is set in a city inside a computer. Bob, a Guardian Program, is the hero, but the evil viruses have the best lines

4 **EFX,** the "multimedia mega-musical" at Las Vegas's MGM Grand, demands a new adjective: Robo-Barnumesque. Although Michael Crawford gets top billing, the high-tech effects are the real stars.

21C
SCANNING THE FUTURE

5 The Australian quarterly **21C** bursts the cyberhype bubble with pointed, political wit. It was here first: Noam Chomsky on interactive shopping and scientist Paul Davies on the downside of time travel.

6 **Emergency Broadcast Network** is information overload you can dance to. On its debut CD, Telecommunication Breakdown, the "guerrilla media rock band" bombards the listener with TV sound bites and techno beats.

7 **Troy Aikman**, known for his smart bomb passes, is funding smart tech for hospitalized children. The Dallas Cowboys quarterback has underwritten "Aikman's End Zone," an online playroom to be installed at the Children's Medical Center of Dallas.

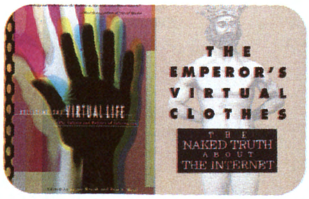
8 This is your train. This is your train on smart drugs. By 1997, every **London Underground** station will feature an interactive kiosk, dispensing information on how to use the world's oldest subway system.

9 The Web site for *Bui Doi: Life Like Dust* *{http://www.w3-design.com/vietgangs}* is as gritty and moving as the documentary itself. It profiles Ricky Phan, a **Vietnamese gang** member blown by fate from war-torn Saigon to a California prison cell.

10 Scott Adams's **Dilbert**, a beleaguered computer industry drone, has struck a responsive chord among techno-weenies. The Dilbert Zone *{http://www.unitedmedia.com:80/comics/dilbert}* proves the class war isn't dead.

11 In her blithely apolitical "popumentary," **Synthetic Pleasures** *{http://www.panix.com:80/~liao/sp/}*, Iara Lee celebrates the ascent of the artificial in postmodern culture, from transsexualism to the theme park casinos of Las Vegas.

12 With a video screen, phone and laptop jack at every seat, the new **Boeing 777** is wired with a vengeance. In an age of "time famine" and information anxiety, do we really need this?


RESISTING THE VIRTUAL LIFE
THE EMPEROR'S VIRTUAL CLOTHES
THE NAKED TRUTH ABOUT THE INTERNET

13 First came Clifford Stoll's **cybergripe**, *Silicon Snake Oil*. Now we have *Resisting the Virtual Life*, which turns a jaundiced eye on cyberbole, and *The Emperor's Virtual Clothes*, which argues that the "infobahn" is just a sexy name for nerdvana.

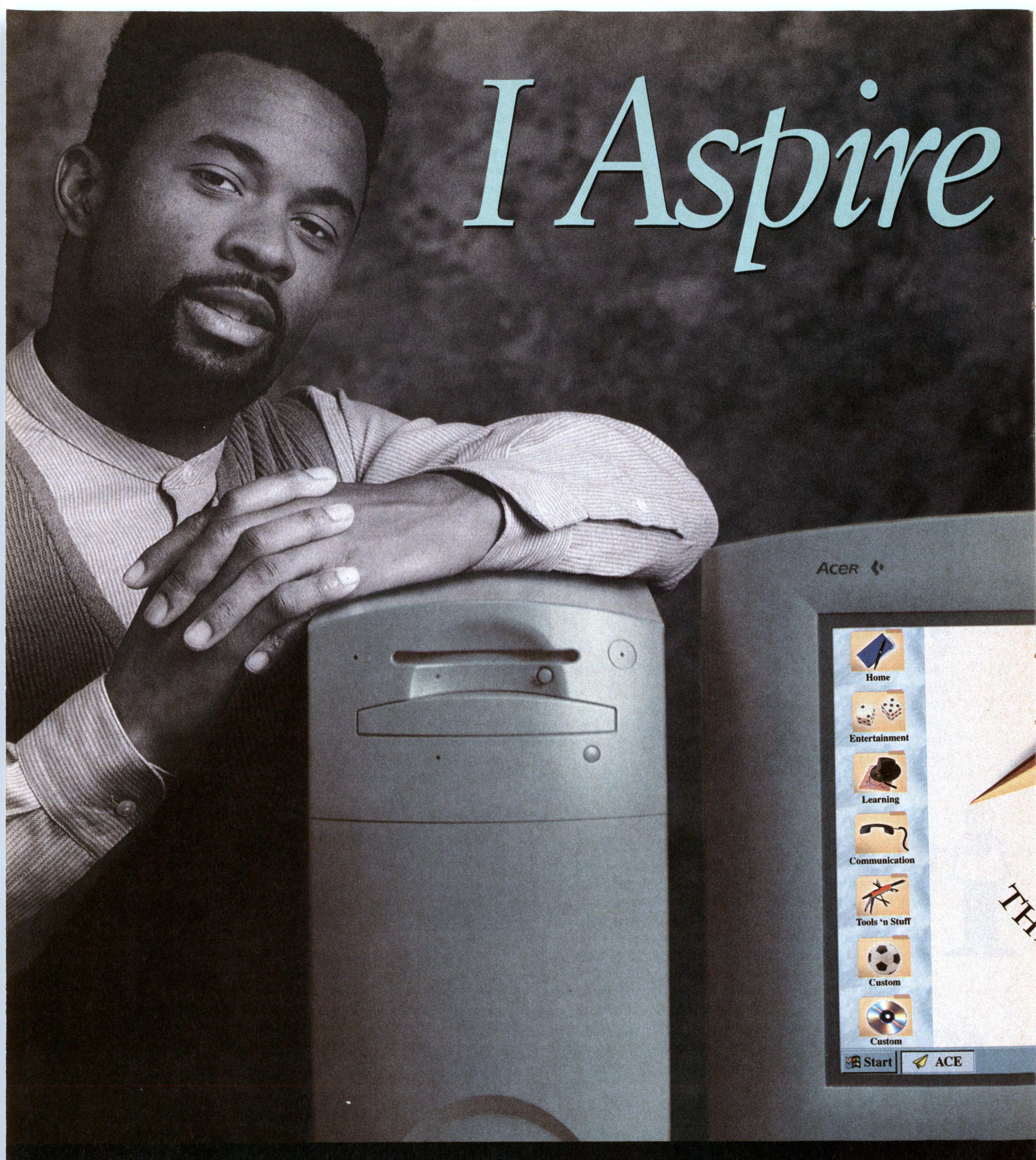
14 **Hideo "Tornado Boy" Nomo,** the Japanese pitcher for the Los Angeles Dodgers, has a Web site *{http://www.st.rim.or.jp:80/~k_ono/tornado/}*. Created by Japanese fans, it encourages readers, in fractured English, to email Nomo ("He will reflect a smile to you getting a heart-warm feeling").

Women's Wire

15 **Women's Wire** is staking its claim on the electronic frontier. This month, the network plans to open its CompuServe homestead *{Go Women}*, featuring women-oriented discussion areas, celebrity guests, a "biz shrink" and more.

Mark Dery's *{markdery@well.com} study of fringe computer culture,* Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century, *will be published by Grove Press in March 1996.*

1: KIRKLAND/ SYGMA: 4: TANNENBAUM/ SYGMA: 7: FOCUS ON SPORTS;
10: UNITED FEATURES SYNDICATE, INC.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Explorer
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The new Acer® Aspire™ simplifies my life, so I have more time to do all the things I want to do. Nothing else looks like or performs like Aspire. Its color-coded cables helped me set up the entire system in less than five minutes. And ACE, the Acer Computer Explorer, organizes the 50 preloaded software and reference titles, so I can point and click to find what I need easily. The five-speed CD-ROM[†] drive, integrated microphone and AuraSound™ 3-D stereo speakers make multimedia, games and presentations really pop. And with Windows® 95 and an Intel® Pentium® processor[†], it can run any software out there. I can even navigate through programs without typing, using its voice-activation capability. Aspire fits my personal style—to make the most of every day.

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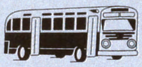
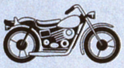
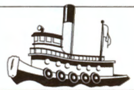
Uptown, Downtown, All Around the Town

Ever try to hail a cab in the rain? Or get stuck above O'Hare? Choosing the right transport is the key to easy access in cyberspace. So go ahead. Kick the tires. And leave room on the desktop for next year's Ferrari. **—By Nikki Finke**

	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy	The Web	Community Boards	BBSs
Claim to fame	Big, and proud of it, consumer-oriented	Largest worldwide, focus on tech & biz	The family-friendliest; now wants to be cool	Information overload, hyped and *happening*	Exclusivity: Like an online country club	Forums of free speech; online for the militia
Ante up	10 free hours, then $9.95/month + fees	10 free hours, then $9.95/month + fees	10 free hours, then $9.95/month + fees	Time is money, but runs $10–30/month	Depends on provider, but $8–40/month	Bare-bones basics for as little as $10/year
Big brother	Heavy monitoring, parental controls	Fairly liberal access; "adult" stuff unlisted	Was called "Stodigy"; new, lighter censoring	Senator James Exon wants Web censored	Varies from none to some on all services	None, but Feds are starting to snoop
What's hot	Click, click—simple! Center Stage a must	Lots of tech talk, info, software to download	Superb Web Browser, nifty Homework Helper	Yahoo, WebCrawler & Lycos search aids	The WELL, Pipeline, Echo are just a few	Trashy talk for some; cheap talk for others
What's not	Gridlock can make it "America OnHold"	All work and no play makes for dull using	Those geeky R2D2 sign-ons. Enough!	Sites that "move" or suddenly don't exist	You're on, you're off, or you can't hang up	Text-only capability is strictly Stone Age
The look	Handsome graphics, simplest interfaces	Used to be confusing; now it's almost easy	New look is still a work in progress	Innovative graphics & stupendous sound	Cutesy interfaces, some can be quirky	As ugly as a manual, character interfaces
Company you keep	Professionals, teens, families, i.e., all of us	Multinational types, newsies & microserfs	Families, teens, kids, even your neighbors	Tons of college kids, tech-heads, trendies	Arty types, litwits, netsurfing veterans	Trekkies, fanatics, weirdos, locals
Sleaze factor	Hot, *hot* talk in the adult forums	Anything goes, if you know where to find it	"Pseudo Chat" can be really cybersexy	Pick a perversion; it's here somewhere	Anything goes; free speech = sex talk	Ugh, can be downright disgusting, perverted
Flame factor	AOLers renowned for exemplary behavior	Tech-talkers can be oh-so-condescending	As cuddly as a puppy, with some exceptions	Most web sites are thrilled to get email	In haiku, or a verse from Pound or Poe	Burn, baby, *burn*! Too hot to handle?
Cross talk	Everyone's chatting, so sometimes slow	Not known for chat, annoying interface	Late but great chat, witty, acerbic & fun	Limited chat, but try Ubique & WebChat	High-brow chat their *raison d'etre*	Chat? What's that? Just post a message
Star gazing	Celebs galore! Sharon Stone, Rolling Stones	Cover subjects from *Forbes* and *Fortune*	Lots of stars from TV, books, health	Unauthorized celeb home pages—yikes!	D*ah*-ling, come meet local writers, artists	Your butcher, baker, valet parker & faker
Food chain	Three million people can't be wrong, right?	This address shows you're status savvy	Not a showy address, but getting better	If you're not here, you're nowhere.	Oh, don't look so smug; snob appeal	Zero status: online anyway & anyhow
Ticket to ride	1-800-827-6364 14.4 modem or less	1-800-848-8199 28.8 modem or less	1-800-PRODIGY 14.4 modem or less	Netscape or Mosaic 28.8 modem best	Word of mouth, etc. 14.4 modem best	Word of mouth, etc. any modem will do
Conveyance						

Freebies for Newbies

A virtual Filofax, the latest adventure game, cocktail recipes—you can find tons of cool stuff free online. Here's how to get it.

Clock watcher: Have time on your side with Time and Chaos Professional, an online organizer. *{CompuServe. Go Center. File: tchaos.zip}*
Maid service: Before you end up facing an ethics committee, get a guide on hiring help without breaking any tax laws. *{http://www.gsa.gov/staff/pa/cic/employ.htm}*
Eye the storm: Big-wind buffs will love HurrTrak for hurricane tracking and forecasting. *{AOL. Keyword: Software. File: htwin60.zip}*
Karaoke kid: Make a fool of yourself with Vocal CD, which scrolls the lyrics of your favorite songs in time to the music. *{http://www.acs.oakland.edu/oak/SimTel/win3/cdrom.html. File:voc1147c.zip}*
Soaring fun: A cut above the average role-playing adventure game, Lone Eagle features stunning virtual scenery, a satisfyingly sanguine plot and your choice of hero or heroine. *{AOL. Keyword: Software. File: lone_s21.exe}*
Ghost writer: You don't have to learn HTML to make your own Web page—let The Duke of URL do it for you. *{AOL. Keyword: Software. File:webwiz16.zip}*
Grand slam: Hone your rusty bridge-playing skills against virtual opponents with MVP Bridge for Windows *{CompuServe. Go Center. File: mvpbrw.zip}*
Next, spitballs: Create the perfect classroom missile with the 3-D Greatest Paper Airplanes. *{CompuServe. Go Center. File: gpa.zip}*
Name your poison: Party hard with the help of the Professional Bartender, a list of over 1,000 drink recipes. *{CompuServe. Go Center. File: barpro.zip}*

THE ZIPLESS FAQ

It's cheap, but not always easy. Notice that most of these files have a **"zip" extension,** indicating they've been shrunk using PkZip, the mother of all compression programs. While it makes for faster transfers, it also means you have to go through the hassle of decompressing them afterwards. Make it easier on yourself by downloading one more program, WinZip *{CompuServe. Go Center. File: winzip.exe}*, a handy little Windows utility that's a compression manager and virus scanner in one. Perfect for the promiscuous downloader.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY NATASHA LESSNIK

Maia Szalavitz@the cyber self

Cyber-Nookie: When Is Online Sex Adultery?

IT WAS MY FIRST FLAME. THE OBJECT OF MY IRE WAS A WOMAN I caught flirting with my boyfriend. She had posted a public message in a Usenet newsgroup, alt.drugs. My boyfriend and I were there—together, but not physically. "You're the only reason I'm here," she whispered seductively in ASCII text. All I could see was the two of them fondling each other in cyberspace. I responded with venom, in a flash of jealous rage. I shocked even myself. Minutes later, I shamefully marshaled my geek skills to figure out how to delete a Usenet post. I felt like I'd walked into a party and had seen my man with a beautiful woman hanging on his arm. He pointed out that he'd never even seen this woman, let alone touched her. Still, I found the interaction threatening. It got me wondering: Just where do you draw the line? Is online action out of line—or is it simply playful fantasy?

I HAD SOME OF MY MOST INTIMATE SEXUAL EXPERIENCES WITH MY LOVER OVER A MODEM LINE. NO WONDER I FOUND THE IDEA OF HIM DOING IT WITH SOMEONE ELSE SO OUTRAGEOUS.

Opportunities for meeting possible sex partners are everywhere online. Just log onto America Online as a woman and go into the chat areas; watch out for the pick-up lines, some subtle, others blunt. If you're game, cybersex soon follows. It may just be words, but those words describe interactive fantasies. Anything goes. The action moves quickly from "Hi, how are you?" to "His lips find her...."

When you have cybersex, you learn what your lover is thinking and feeling when he makes love to you. And how he expresses his emotions can be even more arousing than real sex. You get to know your partner's dreams and fantasies, and his sexual technique.

Though no bodily fluids are exchanged, they are sometimes released during cybersex. One partner may have to take a more active role while the others' hands leave the keyboard. More often, you float on the brink of orgasm, in a haze of intense excitement.

For me, cybersex is even more intense because I had been intimate with my partner in the real world. I know his look, his taste, his smell. I know what it feels like when he actually does what he describes online. No wonder I found the idea of him doing it with someone else so outrageous.

Some of my most intimate sexual encounters have been on the Net. But I'm faithful: I've had cybersex only with my long-term partner. Would it be cheating if one of us had cybersex with someone we didn't know? Does what goes on in the chat rooms count as adultery?

No question that virtual infidelity can lead to the real thing. Everyone has a story about people who met on the Net, had passionate conversations and cybersex, then moved on to real-life adulterous liaisons. Author Tom Clancy's wife is suing him for divorce because of what happened between him and a woman he met online.

Dozens of people who first met their lovers in cyberspace have contacted psychiatrist Avodah Offit, author of *Virtual Love*, a book about an online affair. Sometimes, when they meet in the real world, they're disappointed: Hot-and-heavy fantasy doesn't live up to reality when you meet a "slim 35-year-old" who is actually fat, balding and 50.

Often, though, shared intellectual passions and dreams lead to a real-life "click." Offit recounts one story of a couple, both married to others, who met in an online group devoted to utopian communities. They began spending more and more computer time together. Eventually they met—and left their spouses to start a new life together.

Were they cheating when they were online? Or did they become unfaithful only when they picked up the phone to make their first date?

Offit believes that the affair starts with emotional infidelity—when you spend a great deal of time online, thinking about and being with your lover. An occasional bit of cyber-nookie with another partner isn't necessarily harmful. But compulsive checking for email from someone and having hours of online sex can indicate a problem.

Christina, age 30, an actress married for five years, believes that online passion does not get out of hand as long as the participants never reveal their real names or phone numbers. When her husband became jealous of her online relationships, she told him what she was doing was similar to his subscribing to Penthouse. But the emotional attachment, even in fantasy, can become intense, Christina admits. She had to stop playing with one virtual partner because he was trying to step over the line between fantasy and real life. She cautions, "When you start getting too involved in someone else's life, it takes time and energy away from your real-life partner." Her husband concurs.

Cyberspace forces us to question what we take for granted in real life. What is sex and intimacy? Is it the act or the thought that counts? In the virtual world, lovers have to answer these questions for themselves. As for me, I admit it. I'm possessive, online or off.

Maia Szalavitz *{maia@echonyc. com}, author of the forthcoming* On Drugs *from Scribners, is a producer for FOX television.*

GARY HUSH

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Hah! The old Statue of Liberty play strikes again!

Wolves
19
19
61

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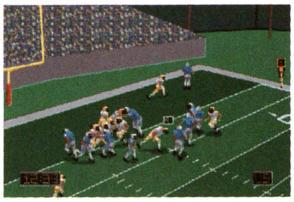

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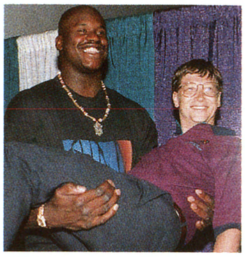


Bill takes five

WHAT A SURPRISE! CyberSurfer ran into **Bill Gates** outside the St. Regis Hotel in New York. There he was, one of the richest and most powerful guys in the world, waiting for a cab. CyberSurfer made his move: "Hey, Bill, shouldn't you be working on the Microsoft Network?" I said in my most authoritative voice, while pointing at my Indiglo. Mr. Bill took the time to crack a smile. And why not? QVC just sold 12,000 copies of his WIN 95 in a two-hour show. Eat your heart out, **Tony Little**. :-) **>>>** Wall Street better learn its ABC's—actually, its AOLs, FTPs and IRCs. When **Netscape** went public last month, moneymen turned high-tech's newest darling into a $2 billion company overnight. They obviously hadn't heard about the anti-Netscape backlash on the Internet. The Netizens' beef goes like this: A) The Net was built on an open standard, B) Netscape seeks browser domination through proprietary technology. A + B = stunted growth of the Net. Bottom line: Netscape may soon be Public Enemy No. 1. **>>>** Does *Time* magazine scribe **Philip Elmer-Dewitt** deserve a break? Net vets are still seething at PEDagogue (as he is referred to on the Net) for validating in a *Time* cover story the now infamous study by **Marty Rimm,** "Marketing Pornography on the Information Superhighway." Prior to heading off for a mountain-top vacation, PED told CyberSurfer: "The Internet is like a school yard—if the bullies start picking on you, you have to defend yourself if you want to stay." Okay, tough guy! So why did you recently post to alt.internet.media-coverage: *"I, personally, am not very concerned about porn on the Net. My wife is."* Mr. Elmer-Dewitt's email address is ped@well.com. **>>>** Looks like the Net police have struck again. **Urban Desires** *{http://desires.com}*, the interactive magazine of metropolitan passions, has modified its popular Lesbian Barbie site due to legal issues. The display originally contained photos of a pair of **Barbie dolls** in various intimate embraces, but now shows only vague silhouettes of those first photos. If you missed the good stuff, get out and surf more often. **>>>** Paranoia, home of the **World Wide Weed** page and the **World Sex Guide,** is so bogged down with usage that the site's administrator, Webmaster KevinTX, had to close the most popular page—uh, the one about breasts. Earlier this year the Femmes, Femmes, Femmes!! site in France was shut because of extreme traffic. So, Senator Exon, it seems pornography is its own worst enemy on the Net. **>>> Bob Stein,** president of the multimedia powerhouse **Voyager,** was busy pushing his CDLink technology at the **Knitting Factory** in New York. It lets programmers sync an audio CD in your PC with a web page on the Net. The audience seemed more interested in the ice cold microbrews being given away at the bar. **>>>** CyberSurfer recently hung out with **Ed Bennet,** the new president of **Prodigy,** at one of the super-hip, techie rave parties thrown at Jupiter Interactive's loft in Silicon Alley (that's Soho, New York). Prodigy has been gaining a major rep as the cool online service, in large part due to Ed's irreverence. At one point, Ed was explaining the meaning of cyberspace to a bevy of models in baby t-shirts, over a round of tequila shots. You gotta love the '90s: computer nerds holding court with supermodels. Beautiful People are one thing, but how long will Prodigy's owners, **Sears** and **IBM,** put up with chat rooms like Blunts and Wives Looking to Cheat with Women?

Tough guy

http://desires.com/

Barbies in bed

The Factory

Jason McCabe Calacanis *{cybrsrfr@pipeline.com} is The CyberSurfer, and the editor of* CyberSurfer *magazine.*

BILL GATES: LOS ANGELES TIMES PHOTO; KNITTING FACTORY: STEVE EICHNER

THE SURF LIST

1. **Dan's Gallery of the Grotesque** *{http://zynet.com/~grotesk/}* Perhaps the most notorious, and banned, site.

2. **Nurse's Home Pages** *{http://www.tezcat.com/~nurse/home.shtml}* Just go, don't ask any questions.

3. **Vomitus Maximus Museum** *{http://www.vomitus.com/vomitus/}* Check out the Gift Shoppe for giant scorpions, tarantulas, freeze-dried bats and vampire mice.

4. **Serial Killer Hit List** *{http://underground.net/Art/Crime/serial.html}* Detailed profiles—and head counts—from history's top serial killers.

5. **Paranoia** *{http://www.paranoia.com/}* Free speech and expression at its best.

6. **MCW Books and Videotapes** "This a catalog of DANGEROUS information!" *{http://www.xmission.com/~seer/mcw/}* The source for all your Ninja, Navy SEAL, pyrotechnics and hacking information.

7. **CyberQueer Lounge** *{http://cyberzine.org/html/GLAIDS/glaidshomepage.html}* The definitive Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender web site.

8. **CandyMan's CandyLand** *{http://www.mcs.net/~candyman/home.html}* For raw information on bombs, hacking, cons & scams, drugs, phrack, phreaking, spying, etc.

9. **Patriots WWW Page** *{http://www.kaiwan.com/~patriot/}* If you have 2,000 pounds of fertilizer in your garage, you'll feel right at home.

10. **bianca's Smut Shack** *{http://bianca.com}* Unfiltered.

(Underground sites come and go quickly, so check them out soon.)

After Hanging Out Online

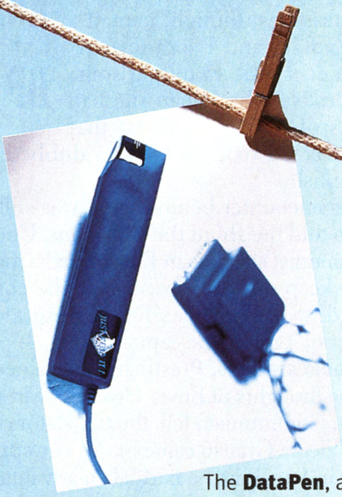
by Peter Scisco

No film. No mailers. No more twin prints. The **QuickTake 150** digital camera goes everywhere and stores as many as 32 pictures in memory. Its simple point-and-shoot operation, built-in flash, macrophoto lens attachment and info-rich display would make any 35mm SLR jealous. The perfect tool for shooting our digital days. *{Apple Computer, 800-538-9696; $739, plus $99 for optional computer connection}*

Alone with your thoughts? What a quaint idea in this world of white noise. The **Quiet Zone 2000** headphones use small battery-powered microphones embedded in the earcups to block sound waves before they reach your ears. Ah, peace and quiet anywhere the whir and buzz of modern life steals away your solitude. *{KOSS, 800-872-5677, $200}*

Bring the video arcade home with the **PlayStation**. Pop in one of its CD games, grab the two-fisted controller, then revel in 3D animation, CD-quality sound, video footage, and gameplay that obliterates Super Nintendo and Sega Genesis from the English language. Slim memory cards save games and let players share and trade levels and characters. Now that's entertainment! *{Sony, 800-239-SONY, $299}*

Just think of the **Virtual i-glasses** personal display system as surround sound for your head. Plug the cables into your video receiver for a personal big-screen TV. Audio is piped through the stereo headphones. Now book readers and *Pulp Fiction* fans can share the same room at the same time. The PC setup connects to your computer and tracks the movement of your head to create a near-virtual-reality experience. *{Virtual i-O, 800-646-3759; video $599, PC $799}*



The **DataPen**, a fat pen with a scanner built into the tip, reads one line of text at a time and records it into your word processor or spreadsheet. A must-have for college students, it assigns the smell of yellow highlighters to the ether of olfactory nostalgia. *{I.R.I.S. America, 800-447-4744; $349 for Windows, $379 for Mac}*

Photograph by Gary Hush

Charles C. Mann@on the road

Doesn't Anyone Here Speak English Anymore!

It was not until I learned about the cadre of Albanian translators that I realized the meaning of electronic multiculturalism. From the offices of Video On Line on the Italian resort island of Sardinia, Paolo Prestinario was trying to explain what it meant to unseat the hegemony of the English language over the Internet. "Albania! Albania!" he kept shouting over the unremitting static of his portable phone. "That's where the translating center is!" Innocent curiosity had led me to Video On Line. While I was lurking in a chat room early one morning, it suddenly dawned on me—the messages are always in English. How, I wondered, do Internet users proceed in countries that don't use the Roman alphabet? If they must communicate in English, how could the Internet be a global network?

After downloading a list of Internet country abbreviations ("it" for Italy, "cn" for China), I hunted for sites in non-English-speaking nations. Eventually, I found a chat room in Ankara, where all the exchanges were in English. Bad English, actually. I envisioned Turkish graduate students at their keyboards, struggling with this alien tongue.

One of the messages, though, named a Web site—www.vol.it—and I soon discovered how different it was. Extolling some European rock festival, the Italian site had put up snippets of Nirvana videos; that morning I was treated to Kurt Cobain dubbed into what sounded like Turkish.

Even with this encounter behind me, I was still surprised when Prestinario told me about the Albanians. Under the 40-year rule of Communist strongman Enver Hoxha, hadn't Albania struggled to keep out every vestige of the corrupt non-Albanian world? So what was happening at the huge translating center in Tiranë, the capital?

I FOUND MY WAY TO AN ITALIAN SITE—AND WAS TREATED TO VIDEO CLIPS OF KURT COBAIN DUBBED INTO TURKISH BY RENEGADE ALBANIAN TRANSLATORS.

Propaganda radio stations, Prestinario explained. A vast network had broadcast the thoughts of Enver Hoxha day in and day out, in 25 languages. When Communism fell, the translators were out of work.

That's when Nicola Grauso came in. An entrepreneur in Cagliari, the largest town in Sardinia, he had taken advantage of Italy's loosening telecommunications law to create a private radio station on the island in 1975. Next came a private TV station, also in Sardinia. By 1986, he was in control of the island's biggest newspaper, *L'unione sarda*, and was looking beyond the island for new challenges. He found them in 1994 — the Internet.

Grauso's conversion happened almost accidentally, I learned from a media presentation on the man and his cause. A Dutch computer scientist named Raenier van Kleij came to Sardinia for personal reasons (a euphemism that usually means "the beach"). Looking for work, he ended up in the offices of Grauso's conglomerate. He told Grauso that the power of millions of computers was creating the first truly global communications system. But there was a problem—the overwhelming majority of the material on this new medium was in English, a language not spoken by the majority of human beings.

Grauso had a vision. All over the world, people would call Video Online. Each dial-in would be a local call, so the cost to the consumer would be low. Once online, the user would see a menu of nations—Italy, France, Germany, Britain, China, Iran, Japan.... Click on Germany and a list of services would appear, all in German; click on Romania and the same would occur in Romanian. Chat groups, email, Web sites, video downloads—everything would be keyed to the language you choose. It would end the hegemony of English; it would make the Net truly multilingual.

Last May, the Video On Line team went on the road, flying from Cagliari to Tunis and Algiers, north to London and Stockholm, west to Moscow, Tehran and Tel Aviv, spreading the gospel.

Reality, of course, has not caught up with the fantasy. Visitors to Video On Line will find various countries lined-up on the home page. Often the lines are overloaded, and inside the sad reality is that English still rules. International chat rooms still need a lingua franca; many non-ASCII languages still have no means of representation on the Net. That's why the Chinese chat room not only uses English, but ends up discussing whether Paul was ever as talented as John or George.

Still, Grauso promises this will change. And it very well may, which should give pause to Internet-users in this country.

For now, English-speaking Internauts exist in a privileged moment. When the online world catches up with the real world, they will be overwhelmed, unable to avoid the disparate lives and languages. While logging onto Video Online, I realized that when the computer world encounters the real world, the encounter may change both.

Or put another way, one night in a Spanish chat room on Video Online, I saw someone drop in with the message, "Hey, anyone in here speak English?"

To which the proud answer was, "No."

Charles C. Mann *{cmann@interserve.com} is a correspondent for* Science *and a contributing editor for* The Atlantic Monthly.

GARY HUSH

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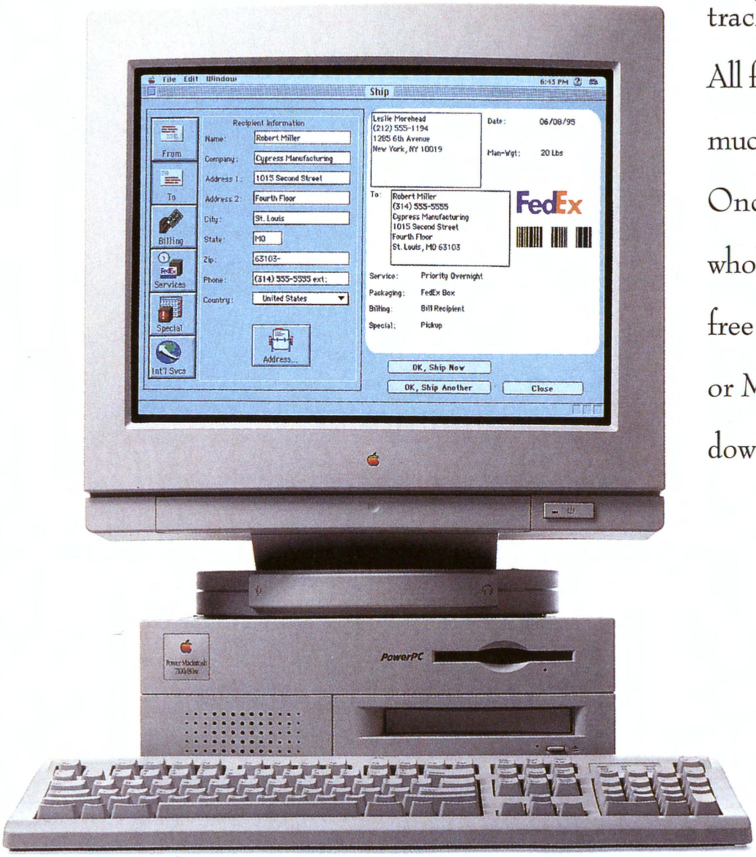

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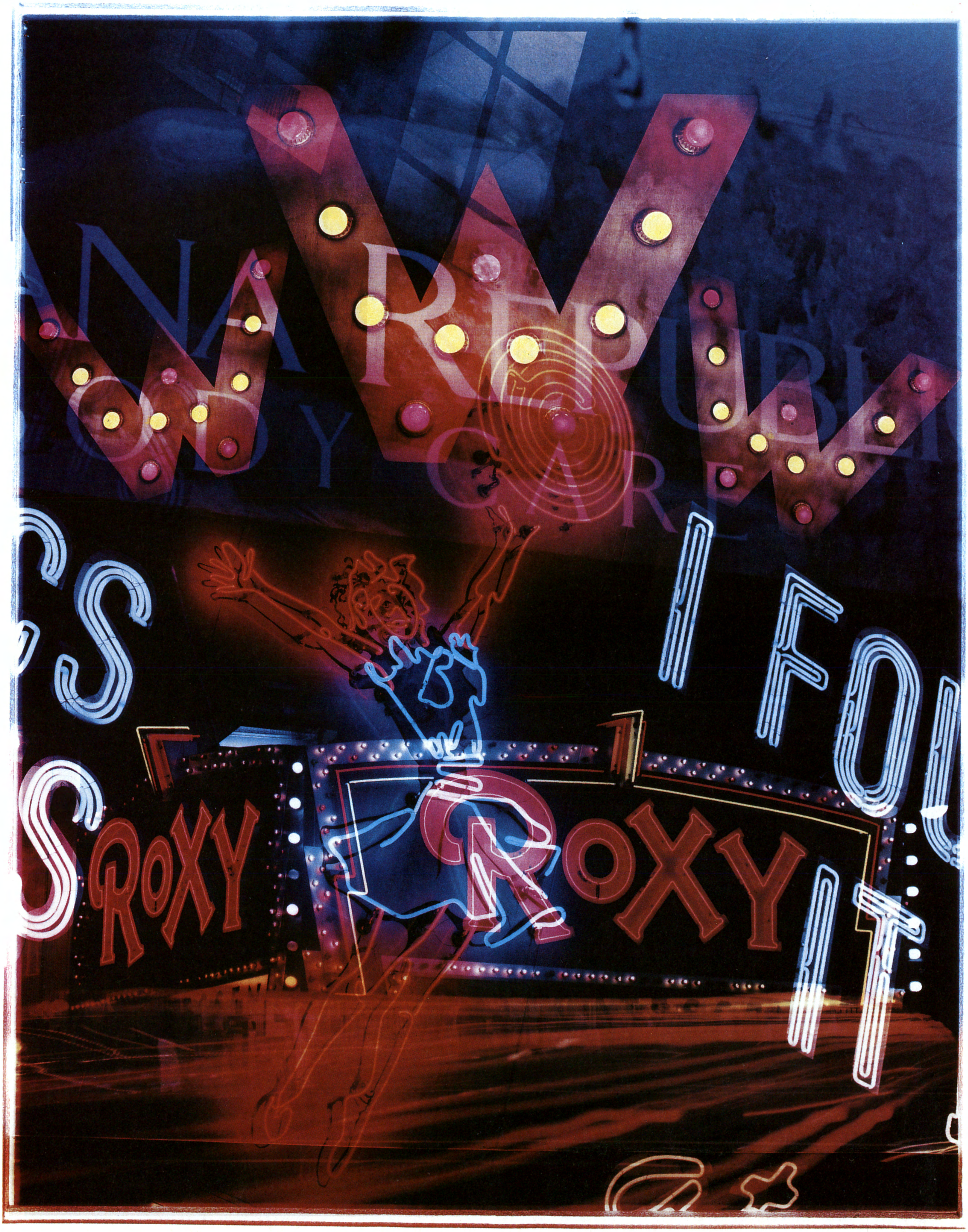
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Photograph by Andrew Moore

What is cyberspace?

A welter, a babble, a thrumming in the ears. Listen: Internet. The Net. Online. Offline. Telnet. O.J. Simpson, Bart Simpson. eWorld, Prodigy, Delphi, GEnie. Newt, Mother Teresa, Eudora. Fetch, Zip and Stuffit. Howard Stern, Michael Jackson, Ricki Lake, Colin Powell. V.32, V.34, V.fast. Email, hardware handshaking, flow control, x-on, x-off. Xmodem, Ymodem, Zmodem. Andy Warhol, Princess Di, Kate Moss, AOL, Pipeline, CIS, wwwbbsmsn…

"Make me wanna holler," as Marvin Gaye observed so astutely in *Inner City Blues*. Is it any wonder some of us are still a little murky about the whole deal?

<<< By Bill Barol >>>

IN QUIETER MOMENTS, WE MAY KNOW this about the online world: That it's out there, lurking. That news sources are telling us (and telling us) that we need to be conversant with it by noon on Tuesday, or risk eternity on the ash heap of history. That it encompasses national online services like America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy; small local bulletin boards like ECHO and The Spring; and, flowing into and around and near these, the Internet, the global network of computer networks, a huge stateless techno-world made up of parts with weird names like Gopher, Usenet and the World Wide Web.

We may know all this, and know enough to find our way around, but still not know what cyberspace is for and where it fits into our lives.

That's the big question, and attempts to answer it are made and re-made almost daily in an ongoing search for metaphors. Which is, of course, part of the problem: Most of them don't do justice to the vastness, the promise and the potential of the medium, or the speed at which the question "Are you online?" is racing through our culture.

The most popular metaphor, for example, is the "Information Superhighway." It's not bad, as rhetoric goes: clean, strong, vivid. Unfortunately, it's all wrong. Cyberspace isn't linear and orderly, like a superhighway. (The word itself, once singled out, has a tinny, anachronistic sound—the sound of the '50s, not the '90s.) It's messy and anarchic, like the spiderweb of blue highways and rural routes the Interstate Highway Act did so much to destroy. That network of roads fostered serendipity, felicity, chance: "Where are we going now?" "I don't know, where do you want to go?" "Umm, I don't know. How about...over there. That looks interesting." And off you go, with no real idea where you're headed, until the end of the trip when you find yourself someplace you've never been before, and never imagined you were going. That's just the way people travel when they surf the Net.

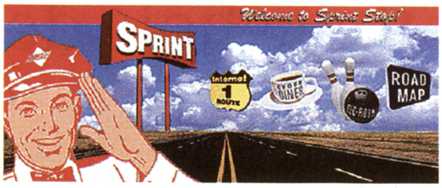
This global road-tripping has widened dramatically in the last year, as the big online services have introduced full access to the sprawling Internet beyond. (And now, the rollout of the Microsoft Network promises—or threatens, depending on your point of view—to introduce as many as nine million new warm bodies to cyberspace.) Almost overnight, it seems, the online world has transformed from a private, closed domain to a new dynamic community of millions, a Virtual City—wide-open, market-driven. Already we have a huge culture clash between the nouveau wired and the academic and government types who were the Net's original citizens. The recent hysteria about adult material on the Net ("CyberPorn!" "CyberSex!" "NetPorn!" "NetSex!") highlights the divisions that still exist between Net culture and mainstream culture—the fear, even, with which the Net is regarded. "We have to make the World Wide Web conform to the rest of society, not the other way around," a spokeswoman for a conservative group told the *San Jose Mercury News* in late

"There are only a few things in this world that people will pay money for. Sex and gambling are at the top of the list. *Penthouse* is even starting pay-per-view on the Internet to take advantage of the 'impulse' buy. Technology is intoxicating. There's the sense that you can do anything, with no consequences."

—ANTHONY GUCCIONE, Executive Vice President, New Media and Filmed Entertainment, GENERAL MEDIA INTERNATIONAL

BASED ON CURRENT GROWTH RATES, ESTIMATED YEAR WHEN EVERY PERSON ON THE PLANET

Sprint Stop
The long-distance company sponsors a '50s truck stop in cyberspace. Why? Who knows? *{http://www.sprint.com/}*



"Yucca's yucatan pork burrito ($2.90) on Hilhurst, north of Franklin, is my favorite local burrito...."
{la.eats}

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Photographs by Suzanne Opton

June. (She was apparently mixing up the whole Internet and one almost entirely skin-free part of it, but never mind.)

Put aside the creepy free-speech implications of the phrase "conform to the rest of society." Further put aside the fact that the Net is a pan-global network which will giggle at any one nation's hubristic attempts to regulate it. Then consider this: There is no "rest of society." The Internet *is* society. It is all of us, for better or worse, the Real World alchemized in a binary bath, and our common future in a world bound up by wires and digits. We all have a stake in sorting out the facts from the rumors. Which leads back to the question: What's really out there?

The popular answer at the moment is Sex. A roiling cauldron of desire, a flaming vat of libido—pick your cliche. Certainly, Sex in Cyberspace is a hot-button issue, but as with many hot-button issues, the reality is somewhat different than the perception. So, let's try again: What's really out there?

How about information? Well, yes, that's not a bad answer. It's an "Information Superhighway," isn't it? Fee-based clipping services like Newshound and Farcast pluck news stories and press releases hot off the wires and deliver them to your e-mailbox, which is either a godsend or The End of Free Time As We Know It. The commercial online services—AOL, Prodigy, CompuServe, eWorld, Delphi, GEnie—do a good job of repackaging material that's first been made available elsewhere. But the "superhighway" part is illusory, as we've seen. And there's reason to question whether what's available on the Net is "information" at all. Internet theorist Clifford Stoll made the observation that the Net is drowning in raw, unprocessed data, as opposed to information, which has been filtered, checked for accuracy, placed in context.

Consider Usenet, the global network of newsgroups. It's the biggest corkboard in the universe: You subscribe to a newsgroup via the Internet, drop by occasionally to read the electronic notes people have posted on a given topic, post a reply if you're so inclined, then come back later to read the replies to your replies. Usenet's greatest strength is its unregulated nature. Computer users swap notes in groups like comp.sys.mac.hardware, free of corporate flackery and unbound by the advertising pressure that can constrain the trade press. Don't trust local restaurant critics? Take a look at the .eats newsgroup for your city and find out what people who paid for their meals thought. A combination of Rumor Central and the old front porch, alt.folklore.urban is the definitive source for "alligator-in-the-sewers" or "dead-frozen Walt Disney" stories. The problem is much of Usenet isn't even as useful as that. Some newsgroups (alt.alt.alt.alt.alt) seem to exist solely as Pirandellian in-jokes; some are perpetually empty of even the dubious information they promise (alt.how.to.join.the.mafia). And throughout Usenet, there's what the wireheads call a poor signal-to-noise ratio—a preponderance of blather, unsubstantiated rumor and outright error.

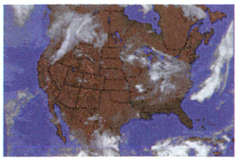
This is, of course, the price you pay for a free exchange of ideas in a medium without

"I'm not a purist. For me, the online connection isn't complete until you meet somebody offline. People who have conversations online and have met face to face have a certain warmth to them, a tolerance. People go even further in terms of intimacy."

—**STACY HORN**, owner, ECHO NYC

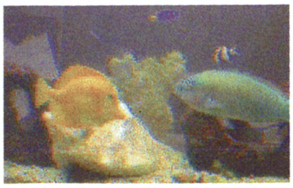
WILL BE ON THE INTERNET: 2003 GROWTH OF WORLD WIDE WEB TRAFFIC IN 1994: 1,713%

Sunny Skies All weather, all the time from WeatherNet at the University of Michigan. *{http://cirrus.sprl.umich.edu/wxnet/}*



"There are millions of us crying. Now it's up to us to carry on and pass on Jerry's message through the way we live our lives...."

{rec.music.gdead}



Fish Cam An aquarium on your desktop—if that's your idea of a good time. *{http://www.netscape.com/fishcam/fishcam.html}*

(*John*) **Grisham's pad**

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JOHN GRISHAM

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A TIME TO

With an iced tea on the back porch of his Mississippi home. In the quiet writing space above his garage. Even at the baseball diamond where he coaches the "Mighty Marlins," his son Ty's little league team. Author *John Grisham* can take his new IBM ThinkPad® 360CE anywhere to work on his next big idea. Whether it's for a new novel, or, more importantly, for the Marlins' crucial '95 season opener.

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“We get flames from both sides.

That’s how we know we’re doing our job right. We think it’s important that our culture not be left out of the information revolution. The business model of the 21st century is inclusion, not exclusion.”

—**DAVID ELLINGTON AND MALCOLM CASSELLE, co-founders, NETNOIR**

central control. It can also cause the sort of blistering headache you get from cheap Chianti. A good way to screen out the chaff is to subscribe to mailing lists, which have much the same content as newsgroups but are distributed by email, subscription only. H-URBAN, from the University of Illinois, allows you to eavesdrop on the ruminations of urban-history scholars. Blues fans gather via BLUES-L, an erudite and passionate list that covers all aspects of the genre. Netsurfers with strong feelings about which is the best Rat Pack movie air it out on the SINATRA list (It was “Ocean’s 11,” by the way). Mailing lists also allow access to e-zines and journals. Among the best: Brock Meeks’s muckraking Cyberwire Dispatch; Win Treese’s Internet Index, à la *Harper’s Index,* which manages to be both abstract and silly; and Randy Cassingham’s THIS is TRUE, a priceless weekly collection of bizarre news stories from around the world.

Those with a more atavistic need to actually hunt-and-gather their data can use an Internet tool called Gopher. The name represents both a metaphoric burrowing through remote databases and the mascot at the University of Minnesota, where the system was developed. Minnesota still maintains the Mother Gopher, with links to every other point in gopherspace. Other useful gophers are reachable at Panix in New York City (the only Gopher dressed in downtown black), Internet Wiretap (White House press releases, government archives, electronic versions of great books) and the Virtual Reference Desk, with sources ranging from the *CIA World Factbook* to a national area-code directory. You could do better things with your time, however, than hang around the English Server at Carnegie Mellon (Remember the worst faculty party you ever had to attend in college? This is it, minus the sherry), or the Electronic Newsstand, a truly bad argument for magazines going online—*Some* of the text!! *None* of the graphic snap!!

Gopher is like the first car you ever owned: obsolete now, but still driveable, and regarded with a certain low-rent affection. It’s largely been supplanted by the next-generation information-access tool—the spiffier World Wide Web. WWW, the fastest-growing part of the Internet, is what most people are talking about when they say “the Net.” In theory, the hype is easy to understand. The Web’s hyperlink capability adds the human elements of chance and serendipity to data access, enabling users to skip effortlessly from one site to another just by clicking on a picture or a highlighted phrase. This is exciting stuff, and its promise is borne out in sites like the Library of Congress home page, with access to the Library’s extraordinary “American Memory” collection of photos, text and ephemera. WORD, an electronic opinion journal, makes especially imaginative use of graphics (three words: animated dancing bananas). Likewise worth a look: What’s On Tonite, a user-customizable TV guide, and WeatherNet, from the weather-obsessed people at the University of Michigan.

But it’s also possible to squander the potential of the WWW medium. A kind of cyber-hysteria can set in, the modern equiv-

NUMBER OF INTERNET ACCESS PROVIDERS IN EGYPT: 4 NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT INTERNET WORLD,

Spatula City You think the Communists have virtual spatulas? I don’t think so, pal. *{http://www.wam.umd.edu/~twoflowr/}*

SPATULA CITY

“The only way to keep our race pure is to keep it pure. Do not sleep with blacks. If you do, I can’t understand how you can call yourself a White man....” *(alt.politics.white-power)*

Men My Mother Dated
Gordon Kiley

BRETTnews Cool online mag, long web address. *{http://www.pathfinder.com/@@oqXnYuBeJQIAQI4W/vibe/vibeart/brettnews/index.html}* alent of climbing Mt. Everest just because it's there. How else to explain that the California Department of Transportation offers real-time WWW Traffic Updates to Californians—who can, with existing technology and absolutely no high-speed data connections or arcane technical expertise required, get the same information every six minutes by turning on the radio?

I'm not complaining, you understand. I'm guilty of it myself. (Why do I subscribe to the email edition of the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report?* Because I can.) But there's an essential paradox at work here. Technology offers us access to unprecedented volumes of data—enough data to induce a kind of exhausted paralysis, in which the only sensible response is to shut down. Am I more engaged with the world now that I get 100 pieces of email a day, or less because I have to make the time to cull it all? Lose one day and it rolls right over you, like an avalanche. It's enough to make a sentient person long for an escape.

Fortunately, the Internet—like a caring, grasping mother—can provide that, too. Goofiness of all flavors can be found on the Net. Some of it's pure—like the Gopher server at the University of Rochester that offers Monty Python transcripts, or BRETT news, Brett Leveridge's deadpan stab at a WWW feature magazine (includes the essential recurring feature "Men My Mother Dated"). Spatula City is a spectacularly silly spoof of online shopping, offering—it seems safe to say this—the Net's biggest selection of virtual spatulas. Some Net resources offer a sweet, utopian, we-are-the-world variety of escape, like the KPIX camera that uploads a live picture of San Francisco Bay to the Net every five minutes. (There was an eerily similar show, Dennis James's *Television Roof*, in the early days of TV, another medium that was supposed to save the world.) Others flirt with a less-attractive world view, like the weirdly fascinating Tulsa County Sheriff's Office gopher. (Downloadable mug shots? Come on in!) And of course, The Jihad to Destroy Barney on the World Wide Web speaks for itself.

All this is well and good. The trouble is, much Net-goofiness—too much—doesn't embrace the real world at all. It's self-referential, inward-focused, Net-centric. Sites like The Amazing Fish Cam! (live coverage of an aquarium at the Northern California offices of Netscape) and the Mother Gopher's Humor menu (all geek jokes, all the time) presume a familiarity with the medium itself, so that in the annoying post-modern way, punch lines need only be feinted at. Mirsky's Worst of the Web and the Netscape Hall of Shame hint at self-mockery, but never shake a clubby, just-us feeling.

This can give you a sort of barbershop-mirror dizziness, a feeling that there's no exit. That feeling gets especially oppressive when you spend time cruising the money-making parts of the Net—scheduled to become a global commercial medium either next week or never, depending on whom you're talking to. Businesses, clamoring to get online, have done so with mixed results. Deep-pocket companies like MCI and Sprint run WWW

> **"The payoff for the consumer** is a chance to get involved—to write back to someone like Tom Hanks, and even to vote on who they'd like to see on TV, through conferences like the one Brandon Tartikoff held to test-market potential talk-show hosts."
>
> —**MICHAEL BOLANOS,** President, ENTERTAINMENT DRIVE

JANUARY 1992: 272 NUMBER OF ATTENDEES AT INTERNET WORLD, DECEMBER 1994: OVER 10,000

Web Worsts Mirsky uncovers wasted bandwidth, like an online ad for a musical potty. *{http://mirsky.turnpike.net/wow/Worst.html}*

"A friend claims that Nielsen ratings are supplemented by data taken from vans that electronically read which channel your TV happens to be tuned to...."

{alt.folklore.urban}

Freeways Southern California traffic conditions, updated every five minutes on the Web, for no good reason. *{http://www.scubed.com}*

> The speed of the medium makes it easy for users to say things they later wish they could take back. In cyberspace, no one can hear you count to ten.

sites—Sprint's, inexplicably, is set up to represent a 1950's truck stop—but offer little in the way of real value. (Unless your idea of heaven is to camp in front of your Macintosh waiting for a sound clip of Candice Bergen to download, in which case, knock yourself out.) But nobody has to visit the site who doesn't want to. Nobody has to visit it at all. One inspiring thing about the Net as a commercial medium is that MCI has zero inherent advantage over, say, the National Pork Producers Council, which went online in June. For relative value, in fact, the pork farmers may have the edge.

Two other trends are far more relevant to Netsurfers than the presence of big companies online. The first is online retailing, which, despite the pie-in-the-sky prognostications of interested parties, remains more or less a rumor. Still, and this may not surprise you, MasterCard is brimming with hope—going as far as teaming up with rival Visa to develop secure transmission of credit-card data over the Net. Stay tuned. Net citizens are more directly affected by the placement of ads on popular Internet sites. Yahoo, a WWW index started by two Stanford students, recently introduced ads on its What's New? page. The Yahoos were smart: They added Reuters news updates for extra value and improved the search capabilities of the site. They've cannily had their cake and eaten it too, maintaining nominal ties to the Net's egalitarian roots while still cashing in. Until online shopping becomes secure, schemes like these will be the real face of commerce on the Net, and online stores will have a distinct Brigadoon quality.

But then, what did retailers expect? Certain tactile pleasures don't translate well to the digital realm. Shopping is one; sex, despite the cyberporn scare, is another. For the record, let's be clear about this: There is adult material online. *Playboy, Penthouse* and *Hustler* all maintain Web sites. Although it's hard to stumble on accidentally and requires some technical smarts to acquire, there is a small volume of binary-encoded dirty pictures on Usenet, and a small volume of erotic fiction. Similar material is available at most newsstands. The problems of the real world don't sit obediently outside the cyberworld, like a golden retriever, waiting to be invited in; they bound through the door and make themselves at home.

The good news is, so do real-world solutions to those problems. Take the summer sex scare. Once the Senate had weighed in with its porn-busting Communications Decency Act (legislation even Newt Gingrich characterized as constitutionally wacky), two congressmen moved quickly to seize the issue. They re-defined the debate in terms of informed parental oversight, rather than governmental intervention, and sparked a flurry of proposals among interested parties: A ratings system; filtering software; Internet education for parents. While none of these fixes is perfect (a ratings system raises the question of who's going to do the rating; software solutions suggest questions about filtering criteria), each is better, smarter and more workable than some big, lumbering CyberPolice force at the Federal level. All of them place responsibility where it belongs, in the hands of parents, and at least make an attempt to help them wield it productively.

While they're at it, by the way, parents might take a look at the really rough stuff on the Net—newsgroups like alt.politics.white-power, where the anonymity of online life is a cloak, and racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, nativist hatespeak is the norm. This, not porn, is the Internet's real dirty little secret. Even short of this extreme, the Net can be an unpleasant place to hang around. Snappishness, rudeness and intolerance frequently define the rules of engagement. Ask anybody who's posted to a Usenet newsgroup a question that was asked and answered the week before. (And God help them if they post from an AOL address, which is the "Kick Me" sign of cyberspace.) It's an inherent flaw in a high-speed, packet-switched world, and worth considering at the end of the day: The speed of the medium, the instantaneousness of communication, makes it easy for users to say things they later wish they could take back. In cyberspace, no one can hear you count to ten.

Perhaps the root problem is that the Net is so big and diffuse that no one feels any pride of ownership. This raises troubling questions about the kind of future we'll share in cyberspace. Ultimately, in fact, it might be most productive to look for a model not in the Internet megalopolis, but in discrete communities: local conferencing systems like The WELL in Sausalito, ECHO and Pipeline in New York City, and The Spring in Austin, Tex. They represent a back-to-the-garden aesthetic, in a high-tech kind of way. Little graphic punch is found on these sites, and their medium of exchange, the written word, is about as retro as possible. Yet these are the places in which the old-fashioned virtues of good citizenship are most actively practiced online, and in their defining characteristics—civility, community, responsiveness to citizen concerns, responsibility for one's words—they suggest an Edenic past, the small-town America that is buried in our national memory. It's the place we all came from. It may be the place we must head in cyberspace, or drown in a digital tsunami. This could be the defining irony of the CyberRevolution: If the Internet is ever to have a true culture of its own, we must all go forward into the past.

Bill Barol *{bbarol@primenet.com} writes about popular culture from Los Angeles.*

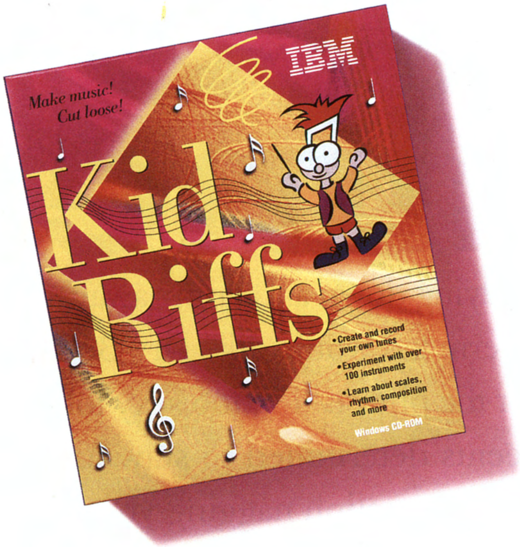
NUMBER OF NORWEGIAN TELEVISION SHOWS WITH A WWW HOME PAGE: 4 {FROM WIN TREESE'S INTERNET INDEX}

Memory From the Library of Congress: Walt Whitman's cardboard butterfly. *{http://lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html}*

"You know Shaggy from Scooby Doo smoked —-. WHy do you think he always had the munchies. And he also did a—d. Why do you think he saw ghost all the time...." *{alt.alt.alt.alt.alt}*

CyberPorn Yes, this stuff is out there. No, it doesn't leap off the monitor and attack helpless children.

IBM assumes no responsibility in the event that the user of this product becomes a tight-pants, long-haired rock star.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[MODEM-VATIONAL SEMINAR]

My So-Called life Online

Cyberspace just isn't dying down and going away, the way a normal, short-term fad would, like Dry Beer or guys with ponytails or the phrase "I'm too sexy for my shirt." This thing seems determined to stay. And if you're like me, there's a question nagging you: The Internet—treasure trove of useful information and fascinating people, or massive new way to waste time?

As one company after another announces its presence on the World Wide Web *{http://wow.ME_TOO.com}* and one magazine after another devotes its cover to the information highway and its implications, you may feel overwhelmed. Maybe you, too, question the value of any phenomenon in direct proportion to the hype surrounding it (think Batman sequels). And nothing has been hyped like "going online."

What's vexing about the online world isn't what's bugging Congress—the global network's ability to transport smutty words and pictures across state lines and age-groups—but, rather, its uncanny ability to swallow time and energy. The last thing we need is one more way to fritter away what little free time we have, another entertainment medium through which the creative output of hundreds of other people washes over us while our own private plans to accomplish something grand someday go on hold for yet another hour, dying a slow, unceremonious death-by-neglect.

I just signed up with a new Internet access provider. For a fixed fee, you can spend 40 hours a month browsing the World Wide Web, exchanging email, downloading files and chatting in newsgroups. That's a lot of time to sit hypnotized by a glowing screen (especially if you add the 40 hours a month I sit in front of the TV).

For any time you spend online over 40 hours a month, the provider charges an additional, per-hour fee. If I spend over 40 hours a month dialing into things, please

<<< By Don Steinberg >>>

Photograph by Bruce Wolf

Microsoft

cut off the life support—because I'll have no life left to support.

Maybe a better ratio for my time would be spending 35 hours a month online—and five taking an elderly relative to the grocery store. Or five or ten, volunteering in a program that keeps city kids out of trouble. Much to my chagrin, however, and more than I care to admit, the online world can be exceedingly useful, occasionally entertaining and always, always time consuming.

Give me an executive's name and an hour to prepare for an interview, and I'll go online for every article mentioning him or her. I'll pillage anything: the Magazine Database on CompuServe, newspaper archives on the Web, even Prodigy's Homework Helper, meant for kids but strong enough for a man. Hey, you use what works.

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW about some obscure author, or trends in vegetarianism, or the best local places for small-game hunting? An online discussion group is likely devoted to it, populated by people you never knew existed, who to varying extents have built their lives around it. Experts and fanatics on demand.

If you tend to treat shopping as a leisure activity, you could go to a virtual mall online, fill a cyber-shopping cart and charge a day's worth of merchandise in 15 minutes—an experience that must leave those who treat shopping as a fun day-trip wondering what to do next.

At the Federal Express Web site, you can act like a corporate mailroom manager and track the location of any package in transit just by typing in the air-bill number. The package has been picked up! Now it's on the plane! It's on a truck nearing its final destination! It's been signed for by the recipient!

Me, I'M HAPPY just to have figured out how to make the online world a USEFUL part of my life, the way I've learned to master other time-and-space-shattering EVERYDAY items, like my telephone, my car and my microwave.

A waste of time? A treasure trove? Sometimes the line is awfully fine.

The answer is the same one for any tool or appliance you bring home. You figure out how to use it (that wood-plane of mine works much better since I learned to grip it correctly). You figure out when you need it. And then it's at your service.

In a recent issue of *Harper*'s, intellectuals debated the value of the online experience. John Perry Barlow, a cyberspace civil libertarian, proclaimed that "we are in the middle of the most transforming technological event since the capture of fire." Others, less enthralled, bemoaned electronic communication as the collapse of genuine human communion. Me, I'm happy just to have figured out how to make it a useful part of my life, the way I've learned to master other time-and-space-shattering everyday items, like my telephone, my car and my microwave. As a research aid. As an entertainment device. As a convenient, low-commitment way to correspond with people. Nothing more earth shattering than that.

ABOUT A MONTH AGO, I got it into my head that I'd put my parents on email. I'm online, my brother's online, my sister got an email address from the hospital where she works. Hey, I figured, we'll be able to broadcast crucial family information—instantaneously. I also wanted to see how regular people react to the online phenomenon, something I would feel silly calling cyberspace in front of them.

So I'm down in Florida visiting my parents. Mom says, "We got this free America Online disk." Yes, ma, you and eighty-trillion other people got the free America Online disk. I can't open a box of frozen waffles without finding a free America Online disk.

So we set up the account. We give them her credit card number, pick a screen name and password, and bingo—we send my brother a test email message. Twenty minutes later (we'd phoned him to say it was coming), we got a reply. He writes, "Orwell predicted this is how all parental nagging will be done in the future."

Like I said, work it into your life.

A couple of months ago, a cable-TV special about cyberspace interviewed online addicts, who described their cyber-obsessions. And various celebrities, comedians and other social commentators expressed their views about online-ness. Author Andrei Codrescum pointed out that all communication technologies are merely better ways of keeping people apart. I assume he included language itself. When the cavemen invented spoken language, it meant you didn't have to hit someone to express displeasure with him. With written language, a mailed letter allowed you to get information, or expressions of love, from someone far away. With printing, one storyteller could reach an audience of thousands. Maybe these advances did make it less of a hardship to be apart. Electronic messages are more of the same. Anyone who thinks they're just as good as a personal conversation is nuts. And maybe they do let us avoid personal contact. But you take the bad with the good.

ONE WOMAN I KNOW, after her separation left her a single, harried, working mom, traded email messages with a cross-country best friend every morning for months to get the support and encouragement she needed. For her, it was a lifesaver. The irony: the separation occurred partly because her husband had been online, too, using those chat rooms you read about. He'd met a woman. He picked her up, and then arranged an "F2F" (a meeting face-to-face, or more accurately, flesh-to-flesh). Of course, the Net didn't make him do something stupid. It made it easier.

Electronic communication: for better or worse.

Ignore all reports about how the Internet is being used today. Despite all the hoopla about the World Wide Web—the heavy traffic that the latest Home Page is getting (100,000 hits a day)—all the news you hear about what's popular may not pertain to you. Keep in mind that the majority of Internet usage today is still coming from college students. These kids are given free Internet accounts, powerful computers and four years to kill. Under those circumstances anyone might log a lot of hits. But you may not fit the *Wired* model. You may not now be or ever have been a "cybernaut," but rather, just a grown-up human being.

Earlier today my dad contacted me, using that old-fashioned device, the telephone. Dad is one of those people whose ambition is to retire without ever using a computer in his business. Though he continues to work, with a phone and a typewriter, he has moved to Florida to prepare for a long lifetime of fishing. It looks like his plan will succeed. Yet, he was calling to say he'd just gone solo, for the first time, on the America Online account I'd set up for him.

"I don't know how, but I ended up in a program called the Living Room," he said. "A bunch of people were hanging around talking, but no one was saying anything. Someone said, 'What are you doing?' Another said, 'I'm sitting here drinking a beer.' God, it was stupid."

He asked my mom how to get the hell out of there. She said, "Just shut it off."

Imagine what it would have been like if the Web had been available to our parents' parents. I find it impossible to conceive of them cruising the Web or playing a CD-ROM game. Their generation was too industrious; they didn't consider self-amusement such a big priority. In those days it was a big deal to get something that plugged in.

Today's adults are different. Take my neighbor, a stay-at-home dad. He says it's the most satisfying job he's ever had. Yet he feels out

How to Go from Zero to 28.8 (and Back)

1 GET A COMPUTER. NOW!

2 Do the modem thing. Modems convert the digits that sit silently inside a computer into **screechy, inhuman noises.** This lets computers communicate. Phone lines are excellent conveyors of screechy, inhuman noise, as call-in-radio-show listeners know well. Most new computers have built-in modems that convey data at 14,400 bits per second—adequate for most uses but slow when showing pictures. If you can get a 28,800 bits-per-second model (28.8K bps), instead of 14.4K bps, do it. It'll add around $90 to your hardware bill; buying one from scratch costs around $200.

3 Choose a service. Using a commercial online service is like having your pizza delivered.It's convenient, safe and effective—the **beginner's best bet**. America Online, CompuServe, The Microsoft Network and Prodigy are just some of the services hoping to bill $5 to $20 a month to your credit card. Their software delivers news, email, financial and travel data, games, pictures, chat about special interests, ranging from Jerry Garcia (still!) to Lamar Alexander (still!), and now the Internet, that plot-device for a crop of current bad Hollywood motion pictures.

4 Or go direct. Like to go out for your pizza? Bypass the commercial services for software that gets you directly into the Internet. You can get **easy-to-use programs** like Internet in a Box, Quarterdeck Internet Suite and Netscape Navigator that will hook you into an Internet access provider (a local company with a computer already on the Net that will hook in your computer too, for a monthly fee). Many providers advertise in the papers and also provide software.

5 Make the most of cruising. Web software lets you avoid the excruciatingly long addresses *{http://badda.babba.bing}* by clicking a button to put favorite places on easy-to-access lists (called bookmarks, **hotlists**, favorite places). Commercial services let you build lists too. The Microsoft Network even lets you turn favorite locations into Windows icons. **Another time-saver:** turn off automatic picture-loading ("inline images"). You'll get a new page's text fast, and you can display the pictures when you need them.

6 Consider the hidden cost! Call Waiting's click can kill an online session. So what about a second phone line? That's an **extra** $10 to $30 a month. If you stick with one phone line, you can block Call Waiting (ask your phone company how) or sign up for Answer Call, which lets callers leave messages if your line, for whatever reason, is busy—something an answering machine can't do. **Wow,** a phone company extra with a purpose!

7 Maximize your email. Don't enter long email addresses every time you send a message. **Try this trick:** save a message from each person. Then simply reply to it each time you want to put the address in the TO: line. Most services also let you create nicknames for correspondents. The computer will keep mom's address on file, then let you simply send your memos to "mom."

8 Hang up! Internet software uses a phone "dialer." Even if you close your email and Web-browser, the dialer may remain connected, racking up online time and charges. The dialer usually has a "hang up" button. **Remember** to use it.

9 Practice "netiquette." It's simple. DON'T USE ALL CAPS, especially in social situations (i.e., chat). It's **ANNOYING**.

10 Know how to cancel! It's easy to sign up for an online service—but hard to cancel. Sometimes you have to make a phone call or even write a **snail-mail letter!** Prepare yourself to be held captive a bit. **Tip:** Don't zap the software too soon. Wait till you've officially pulled the plug.

of the loop. So he chats online occasionally, with a stay-at-home-dad group. They trade stories about how moms at the playground shun them or how male peers think they are unemployable.

The same guy, by no stretch of the imagination a computer dweeb, has a family get-together every Sunday night in an online chat room. Family members all enter a secret code word at 9 p.m., and suddenly they're having a real-time, typed conversation. For an hour they trade gossip, brag about children and make travel plans.

One night, in the middle of their chat, a stranger used their secret access code word and entered the room.

"We have an intruder" typed one brother. Who are you? Why are you here? they asked. "It was like you're having a party on your porch and someone just walks in and sits down," my neighbor recalls.

They checked the intruder's user profile—a very graphic sexual profile. Convincing him they had nothing to offer in his area of interest, they coaxed him to leave. Then they logged off and sent private messages to one another to select a new code word.

Now, that's getting right back on the horse, I told my neighbor. But what did his parents think?

"Oh, our parents aren't in the chat," he said. "Just the siblings. That's rule number one. I mean, if your parents are online with you, how can you talk about them?"

In times of rapid technological change, you live and learn.

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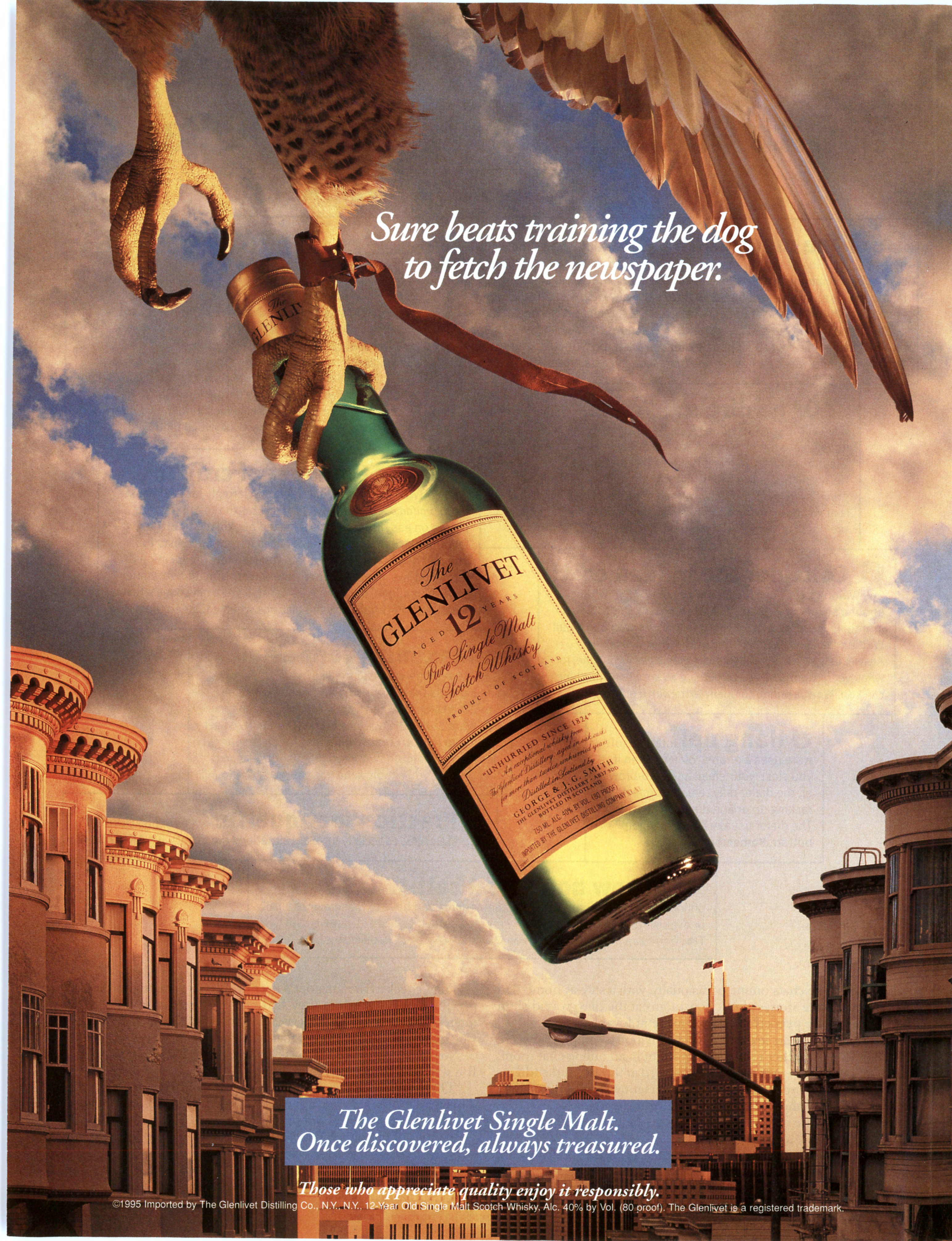
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Real Life Real People Real Places Online

LIBERTY
IN GOD WE TRUST

Why go online? Not to transform our lives, just to make them a little easier. Fitness buffs exchange advice and support—and learn more about free radicals than they really want to know. First-time home buyers find affordable rates; avid investors, up-to-the-minute stock quotes. Skiers book pilgrimages to Telluride or Gstaad. Weary business travelers connect with far-off family and friends from lonely hotel rooms. Kids get homework help—and fight over the coolest skateboards. Total strangers mourn together, or rejoice, or simply chat. Whatever we online adventurers are seeking, we're finding it—and more—in the as-yet-uncharted territory known as the Virtual City. You know, maybe that is transforming our lives after all.

HEALTH

MONEY

TRAVEL

KIDS

SPORTS

HOME

FUN

Illustrations by Jenny Clark

ask the doctor: what's the HEALTH connection?

Any new technology can be intimidating, so we asked **Dr. Joyce Brothers** how to battle technophobia. Her prescription? Develop a personal relationship with the Net.

Q More and more people are using time-saving online health resources like symptom checklists and virtual support groups these days. Is it really safe for them to be getting medical advice and information in cyberspace?

A The Internet and all the commercial online services—like America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy—are a great source of information and support for getting and staying healthy, but they won't ever replace your doctor.

Like virtual reality, going online can be exciting and dangerous at the same time. When people encounter new ideas and groups, they may not feel comfortable at first. They may be afraid of doing something wrong. But as surfing the net develops into something we all do and understand, it will become safer and safer.

Q But there are people who still resist getting online. What are they afraid of?

A Feeling powerless versus feeling powerful. That's the key to whether you're a technophobe or a technophile. Technology offers wonderful advantages, but it can also be extremely frustrating to learn to use. Psychologists like me will always have a job as long as there's voice mail, for example. It can drive people wild.

Many people have a very real fear of new technology. For example, older people who have spent years getting their lives in order don't want something new coming in and making things more difficult for them. Also, they just don't see the need for it. They've gotten along without it this far, so they don't feel the need to get used to it now. But they also feel they may be missing out on something.

Q How can technophobes learn from technophiles? What can someone do to overcome the fear of going online?

A When you pick up a phone, you don't think "How does it work?" or "What am I doing wrong?" because you have a relationship with it. You know what it does for you. You like what it does in your life.

Technophobes need to form relationships with other modern inventions, like cyberspace. They should find a way to make these new tools part of everyday life.

People who love to go online love it because they have a personal relationship with it. They use it to connect with people, to find information, to be entertained. Cyberspace serves them. They don't serve it. Technology is meant to be our servant, not our master.

Q How can people who want to take advantage of all the useful health information online overcome their fear of cyberspace?

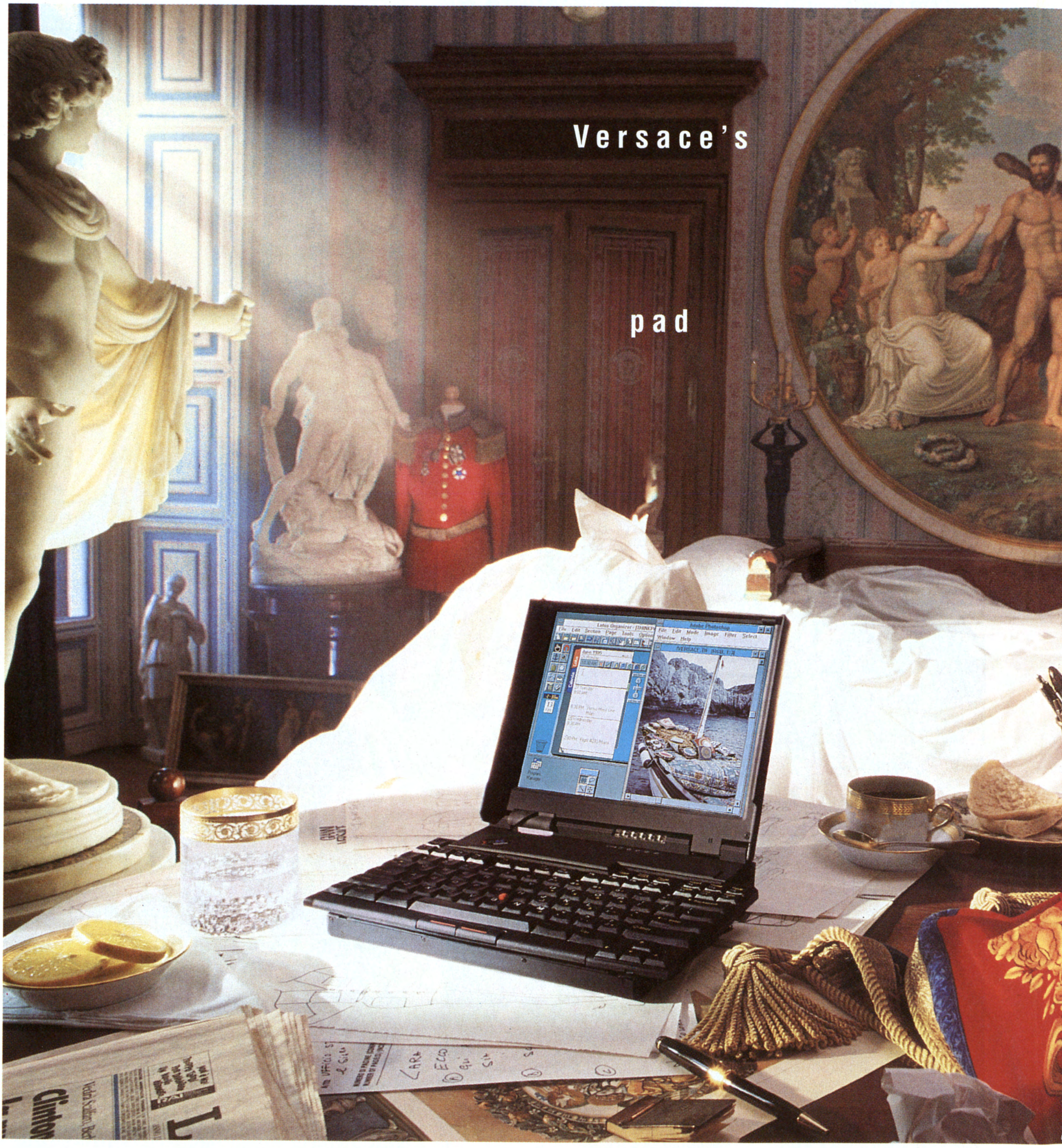
A If you're afraid of using technology that's new to you, have someone "introduce" it to you as something fun to play with. We close our ears to the term *user-friendly* because we don't really believe it. It doesn't mean much to us. But if something were called "user-funny"—and it really was fun to use—we'd like it more. Don't worry about how the technology works or why—just have fun with it.

Webster's Twentieth Century Dictionary
THE COLUMBIA ENCYCLOPEDIA
WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE
ILLUSTRATED BY ROCKWELL KENT

"There isn't anything better than having something new to give us more leisure time—to have the odds and ends of our lives taken care of."

Photograph by Ken Schles

(*Gianni*)



The IBM ThinkPad 701C: *4.5 lbs.*[1]*, expandable full-size keyboard, 10.4″ TFT color screen (measured diagonally), 486DX4 75MHz processor, up to 720MB*[2] *hard drive, up to 24MB RAM, ThinkPad EasyServ™ courier repair service.*[3] *For an IBM Authorized Business Partner,* **call 1 800 772-2227.**

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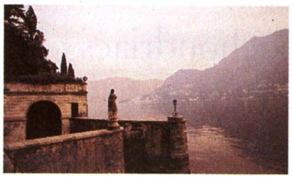
[1] With battery, excludes external disk drive. Weight may vary. [2] MB=million bytes. [3] Available only in the U.S. and Canada. No additional charge during warranty. IBM and ThinkPad are registered trademarks and There is a difference and ThinkPad EasyServ are trademarks of



From metal-mesh evening gowns to red polyvinyl suits, *Gianni Versace* has earned a reputation for boldly creative designs. And lately, they're brought to life on a new IBM ThinkPad® 701C. Working from the bedroom of his Lake Como villa, Versace draws on neoclassical surroundings for design inspiration, using his ThinkPad to freely experiment with color and style. An approach that, uniquely, marries 18th-century art with 20th-century technology.

There is a difference™

IBM®

International Business Machines Corporation. PhotoShop is a registered trademark of Adobe Systems, Inc. ©1995 IBM Corporation.

Q I worry about every **bump and scrape.** My doctor doesn't want to hear it anymore. What do I do?

A Find help for hypochondriacs online—anytime of the day or night, **any day** of the week.

You have a million questions. How do I know if I have an ulcer? Is it safe to take Prozac and Nyquil at the same time? Will NutraSweet stunt my kid's growth? What's a preacher's cyst? Is it feed a cold and starve a fever, or the other way around? Can I really freeze my head when I die?

You don't have to waste half a day in your doctor's waiting room to get answers to your questions. Instead Go Ask Alice, the **virtual doctor** at Columbia University's interactive Q&A Health Line *{http://www.cc.Columbia.edu:80/cu/healthwise/}*.

Alice only answers about a dozen medical queries—mainly from local university types worried about hair loss and final exams—each week, but you can always browse through the archives of past Q&As for valuable information on health and fitness, emotional well-being and sexuality.

If Alice doesn't have the answers, try the Medical Center *{http://antares.prodigy.com/mediccoi.htm}*, where you can **talk live** to health professionals each Wednesday night, and check Prodigy and Internet forums on health and medical topics.

Unless you need immediate feedback, your best bet is to tap into the vast medical reference databases online. Start at the Planet Earth Home Page *{http://www.nosc.mil/planet _earth/medicine.html}*, where you'll find links to databases called Communicable Diseases and WorldWide Wellness, as well as to groups like The National Institutes of Health and the World Health Organization. You can also visit Yahoo's Health listings for a less intimidating collection of medical sites, including health-care product and alternative medicine companies.

Speaking of **alternative medicine**, you'll find everything you need to know about chiropractic, biofeedback, acupuncture, nutritional healing, water birthing and other alternative therapies at Dr. Bower's Complementary Medicine Home Page *{http://galen.med.virgina.edu/~pjb3s/ComplementaryHomePage.html}*. It even includes a state-by-state list of current practitioners in each of these alternative health disciplines.

You can also find a grab bag of alternative information on anti-aging, smart drugs, fitness, insomnia and jet lag at the Life Extension Foundation *{http://aeiveos.wa.com/lef/index.html}*, which not surprisingly, got its start in cryogenics.

For less drastic ways of **prolonging your life**, check the Lifelines Health Page *{http://www.idsolute.com/}* for extensive advice on exercise and fat reduction. It's also a good idea to consult the Vegetarian Pages *{http://catless.ncl.ac.uk/Vegetarian}* for nutritional information, Q&As, a guide to current veggie events and even contact information for vegetarian singles groups. Whole Foods Market *{http://www.whole foods.com/wf.html}* is the source for information on organically grown products, new food labeling laws and aromatherapy.

If your concerns are more procreational than recreational, check with the **infertility** expert at Women's Health *{http://www.mindspring.com/~mperloe/}*, a page created by Mark Perloe, co-author of *Miracle Babies and Other Happy Endings*. You'll also find Q&As, glossaries and pointers to mailing lists and discussion groups, like alt.infertility. If you're considering other alternatives, visit the AdoptioNetwork *{http://www.infi.net/adopt/}*, a no-nonsense page that addresses the needs of birth parents, adoptive parents and children in a thorough, balanced, style. This volunteer effort includes exhaustive references to private and public **adoption** agencies in the United States and abroad, as well as contacts for support groups around the country.

When you do find yourself going into the **baby** business, prepare—as much as possible—at the ParentsPlace *{http://www.parentsplace.com/}* reading room, a well-stocked source of newsletters, articles and books on pregnancy and early childhood.

For more reading material on child development and behavior, as well as discussion groups and reader recommendations, visit the D.O.S.A. Parenting Home Page *{http://www.linnet.ca/~ahawkins}*. You'll find a listing of databases on parenting, childhood diseases and birth defects at PEDINFO *{http://www.lhl.uab.edu/pedinfo}* and information on the latest child-related legislation coming out of Washington at the Child Care Resources page *{http://timon.sir.arizona.edu/govdocs/childcar/child~1.htm}*. Confidential to parents of teenagers: When all else fails, post questions on misc.kids, an Internet newsgroup where parents swap stories and ideas about discipline, nutrition, education and health.

When getting medical information online, expect to encounter disclaimers about how you should never make any diagnoses or take any medication without first consulting your doctor. It's sound advice—a little information can be a deadly thing.

By the way, if you notice a tingling in your wrists and hands at the end of a long day of trolling health databases, run, don't walk, to the Patient's Guide to **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome** *{http://www.cyberport.net/mmg/cts/ctsintro.html}*. Find out everything you can about the condition: its diagnosis, treatment and what you can do to prevent it. This may be the most important question you ask online.

Michelle V. Rafter *{michellevr@aol. com}, a columnist for Reuters, writes about cyberspace and technology from Los Angeles.*

CARE TAKERS

ALL-AROUND HELP The **Better Health & Medical Forum** on America Online *{Keyword: Health}* is a guide to support groups for medical problems ranging from autism to post-polio syndrome.

AIDS/HIV Chat in a virtual coffeehouse, make a contribution or get the facts on AIDS and HIV at **RedRibbonNet** *{http://worldclass.com/redribbn/}*. **The Children with AIDS Project** *{http://www.aidskids.org/}* pairs families with HIV-positive kids and AIDS orphans for adoption or foster care.

ALCOHOLISM Recovering alcoholics can get moral support from the **alt.recovery.aa** Internet newsgroup, or by reading chapters from the **Alcoholics Anonymous handbook***{http://electricstores.com/bigbook/bb_index.htm}*.

ARTHRITIS The **Arthritis Foundation** *{http://www.crl.com/~fredt/AF/arthritis.html}* offers disease background, programs through local chapters, an online magazine and contact information.

CANCER The **OncoLink** *{http://cancer. med. upenn.edu/}* cancer database from the University of Pennsylvania has a special area where patients can share their stories, artwork and poems.

CHILDREN'S AILMENTS Check with **LINCS** *{408-727-7227}*, a private bulletin board listing over 2,000 resources for children needing specialized care, for a new Web resource, **Parents Helping Parents** *{http://www.portal.com/~cbntmkr/php.html}*.

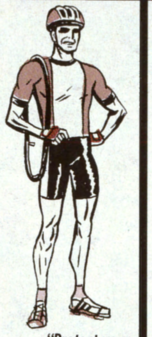
DIABETES Get information on the latest diabetes research and self-help equipment from the **Diabetes Knowledgebase** *{http://www.biostat.wisc.edu/diaknow/index.htm}*. You'll also find tasty recipes for diabetes-friendly foods.

THE NISSAN PATHFINDER

Practical Guide to Outdoor Adventure

COMFORT:
5-link coil-spring rear suspension

NPF-06


"Protect your noggin"

YEAR 95

MOUNTAIN BIKING: Observations and Tips

Dust Caking Your Lungs. Gravel Embedded in Your Skin. Poison Oak Burning Like Hot Pokers.

WILL THE FUN NEVER END?

No doubt, mountain bikers possess a stronger masochistic streak than, say, lawn bowlers or tournament bridge players. But, then again, they also stand a much greater likelihood of finding themselves at the banks of pristine mountain creeks, having one-on-one encounters with white-tailed deer, and otherwise leaving the land of 24-hour mini-marts far, far away. In our opinion, such scenery is more than fair compensation for a few scrapes and bruises (or even a contagious rash, if the mountain creek is really pristine). What follows are a few tips, observations, and miscellaneous non sequiturs about one of our favorite sports. And, of course, a few words about the rugged Nissan Pathfinder,® which is your best bet for getting up to the hills. (Unless you really want your lungs to burn.)

Mailbag:

"Should I shave my legs? P.S. I am a guy."
-C.M., Portland, Ore.
Dear C.M. - Shaving your leg hair makes wounds easier to clean after a wipeout. If your legs are normally quite hairy, you may also experience certain aerodynamic benefits.

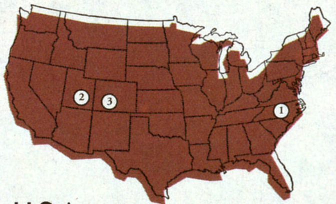
Driving Tip: Know Your Garage Height

When carrying a bicycle on the Pathfinder's roof rack, always note the clearance height of overhead structures. This may sound obvious, but many a 2,000-dollar bicycle has met its demise in encounters with low-altitude parking garage entrances. (For the record, a standard Pathfinder SE-V6 and 36" bicycle require at least 9 feet.)

① **The Tsali Trail, North Carolina. The Left Loop of the four single-track loops making up the Tsali Trail has been called one of the ten best off-road rides in the country. There is enough riding to fill the week, so consider establishing a base camp at the Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC), 15 miles west of Bryson City.**

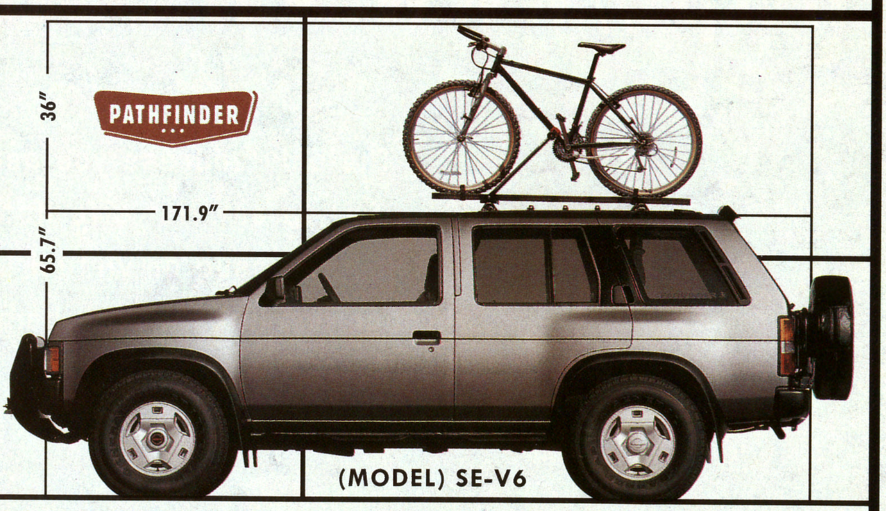
② **The Slick Rock Trail, Moab, Utah. Technically demanding, physically intimidating, and completely beautiful, this is mountain biking's ultimate testing ground. The 12-mile main loop over sandstone is marked by white dots; yellow dots (frequent in number) warn of potential danger.**

③ **The Tenth Mountain Huts, Colorado. The massive Tenth Mountain system offers spectacular hut-to-hut riding around Colorado's Holy Cross Wilderness area, Vail Pass, and more. It also crosses the Continental Divide at 11,925-foot (wheeze) Hagerman Pass. Call the Tenth Mountain Division Hut Association at (303) 925-5775 for reservations.**



USA

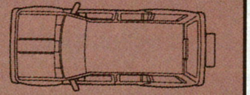
Great Rides



Why Pathfinder? Aside from giant lungs and quads of steel, the Nissan Pathfinder is the mountain biker's best friend. Its powerful V6 engine, high ground clearance and available four-wheel drive make reaching rugged and remote trailheads an easy proposition. And comfort needs are thoughtfully attended to by such features as air conditioning with non-CFC refrigerant and a 130-watt, 8-speaker stereo system. Of particular interest to mountain bikers is the Four Seasons Roof Rack (standard on SE-V6) with available bike attachments, and a center storage bin that easily accommodates first-aid items. (Note: The rank beginner's first-aid kit may require the cargo area of the split fold-down rear seats.)

☎ For more information on the Pathfinder, visit us at http://www.nissanmotors.com/pathfinder/

• Top View



PATHFINDER

Genuine Nissan and non-Nissan accessories shown.

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Smart people always read the fine print. And they always wear their seat belts.

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http://www.virtcitnow.com

The only address you need.
Get to any Net site listed
in this issue of Virtual City
through hot links on our home page.

VirtualCity

YOUR GUIDE TO CYBER CULTURE

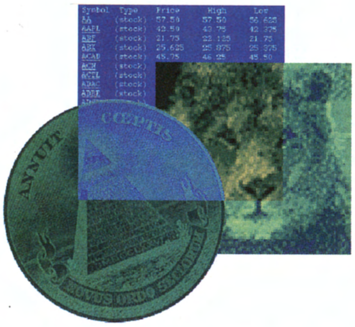
financial aid: mind over MONEY matters

Ten ways to cut the bankers, brokers and accountants out of your money business—from **your wallet** to Wall Street.

1. Open a branch office in your bedroom with Web-based electronic banking. Citibank *{http://www.tti.com/}*, for example, lets you get statements, pay bills, transfer money and apply for loans online.

2. Dial your bank direct using your own personal finance package. Bank of America recently purchased MECA Software, makers of Managing Your Money, and software giants like Intuit and Microsoft *{http://www.microsoft.com/}* are racing to sign up institutions to offer online banking through Quicken and Money, their respective personal finance applications.

3. Download virtual dollars, store them on your computer, then send them to online merchants when it's time to buy. That's the idea behind electronic cash, or e-cash, the Internet's answer to ATM machines. Companies like CyberCash *{http://www.cybercash.com/}* and DigiCash *{http://www.digi cash.com}* are working on ways to put electronic money in your pocket—or at least on your hard drive.



4. Keep a roof over your head with online mortgage and financing from the AAA National Mortgage Directory *{http://www. dirs.com/mortgage/}*, which includes hundreds of lenders and financial institutions nationwide. From this one-stop source, you can research mortgage companies, locate a credit repair service, calculate monthly payments, post questions for mortgage experts and order guides on everything from adjustable rate mortgages to buying a manufactured mobile home.

5. Fire your accountant when tax time rolls around. Instead, use Tax Wizard *{http://taxwizard.com/}*, the Web's first full-featured tax service. Or you can always do it the hard way—by yourself. Just download the forms directly from the Internal Revenue Service *{http://www.ustreas.gov/cgi-bin/all forms}*, then search the complete text of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.

6. Pay back your creditors with help from the Debt Counselors of America, a nonprofit group that helps you consolidate debts and arrange a payment schedule *{http://www.ip.net/shops/GET_OUT_OF_DEBT}*.

7. Protect yourself with insurance policies for your home, business or car from ITT Hartford Insurance Group *{http://www.itthartford.com/}*. For information about insurance in general, try the Insurance Net *{http://insurancenet.com/index.html}*, an information-rich, industry-sponsored resource with practical product and market information.

8. Save something for your golden years with a 401k plan from Fidelity Investments *{http://www.fid inv.com/}* or Dreyfus *{http://networth.galt.com/dreyfus/}*. For information on planning your retirement try the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Retirement benefits information *{http://www. ssa.gov/programs/retirement/publications/retirement.html}*. Talk to other retirees about financial planning in CompuServe's Retirement Living Forum *{Go Retirement}*.

9. Get insider information and advice on America Online's Investors Network *{Keyword: Investors}*, an opinionated forum for dishing dirt on the latest deals and dangers in the market. Then invest your money with a financial services organization like J.P. Morgan *{http://www.jpmorgan.com/}*, which offers investment options in stocks, mutual funds, bonds and more.

10. Watch your money grow minute by minute with the latest market information on stocks, bonds, commodity futures and mutual funds from The Wall Street Journal Money & Investing Update *{http://update.wsj.com/}* or Quote.Com *{http://www.quote.com}*. For comprehensive financial information, including stock prices, economic indicators and links to financial databases, check out James Garven's monolithic FINWeb *{http://riskweb.bus.utexas.edu/finweb.html}*.

Matthew Schoenlein *{schoenlein@aol. com} is a freelance writer living in San Francisco.*

HELP WANTED

WHO'S HIRING Start your job hunt with thousands of job listings on **The Monster Board** *{http://199.94.216.71:81/home.html}* and **America's Job Bank** *{http://www.ajb.dni.us/job.search/index.html}*.

RELOCATION Look for jobs in specific cities, from Seattle to San Antonio, at the **Online Career Center** *{http://www.occ.com/occ/JobsByCity.html}*.

A FEW GOOD PEOPLE Use a hired gun to get the right job: **The Career Doctor** *{http://palm-beach. net/careerdr/}* recruits high-level executives.

GETTING IN THE DOOR Polish your resume with tips from Tom Jackson, author of *The Perfect Resume,* in AOL's **Resume Templates** in the Career Center. *{Keyword: Career}*.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS Prepare for that first interview at the **careerWEB** *{http://www.cweb.com/}* or **CareerMosaic** *{http://www.careermosaic.com:80/cm/cm1.html}*.

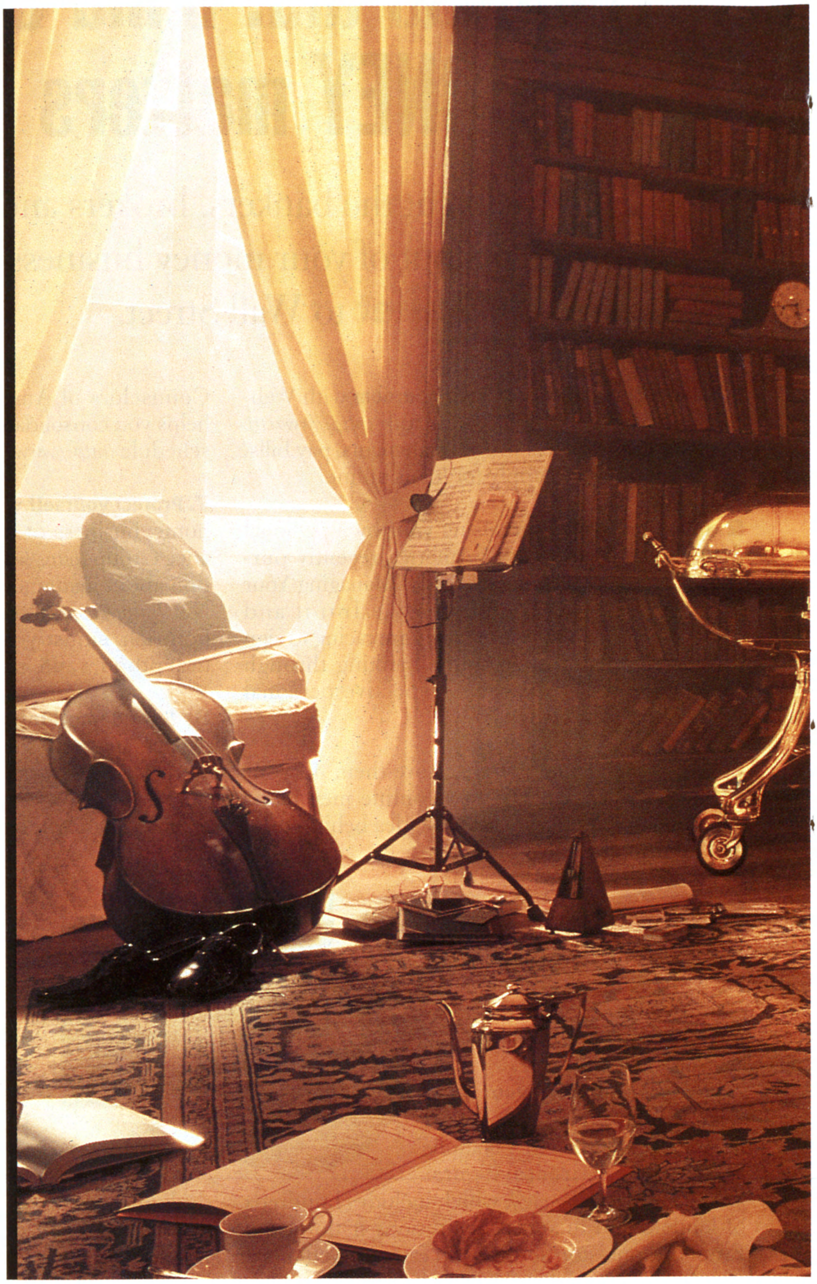
BARGAINING POWER Practice your salary negotiation skills in the **Global Network Navigator's Career & Employment Forum** *{http://www.gnn.com/gnn/wic/bus.toc.html_employment}*.

PERKS AND BENNIES Compare health benefits and other extras in CompuServe's **Career Management Forum** *{Go Career}*.

INKING THE DEAL Before you put pen to paper, visit **The Riley Guide** *{http://www.wpi.edu/~mfriley/jobguide.html}* for pointers on the dos and don'ts of employment contracts.

NETWORKING Looking for your career peer group? **Professionals Online** *{http://www.prosonline.com/}* has listings of sites, categorized by profession.

For cellist *Yo-Yo Ma,* calling a hotel room home is nothing new. While on tour, it might be a converted monastery in Florence one day, and a Hong Kong high-rise the next. Not surprisingly, Yo-Yo Ma prefers to travel light. A goal made easier by his new IBM ThinkPad® 755CE. And more difficult by his 250-year-old Stradivarius, which, understandably, requires its own separate seat on the plane.



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[1] MB = million bytes. [2] IBM's Statement of Limited Warranty is available upon request (call 1 800 772-2227). International Warranty Service is available only in countries where ThinkPad is sold and serviced. Registration required. Other restrictions apply. IBM and ThinkPad are

(*Yo - Yo*)

The IBM ThinkPad 755CE: *486DX4 100MHz processor, 10.4" black-matrix TFT color display (measured diagonally), removable 810 MB[1] hard drive, built-in speakerphone, fax modem, Infrared File Transfer, 3-year warranty.[2] For an IBM Authorized Business Partner, call 1 800 772-2227. Or for details by fax, call 1 800 IBM-4FAX (key-in ID# 1622).*

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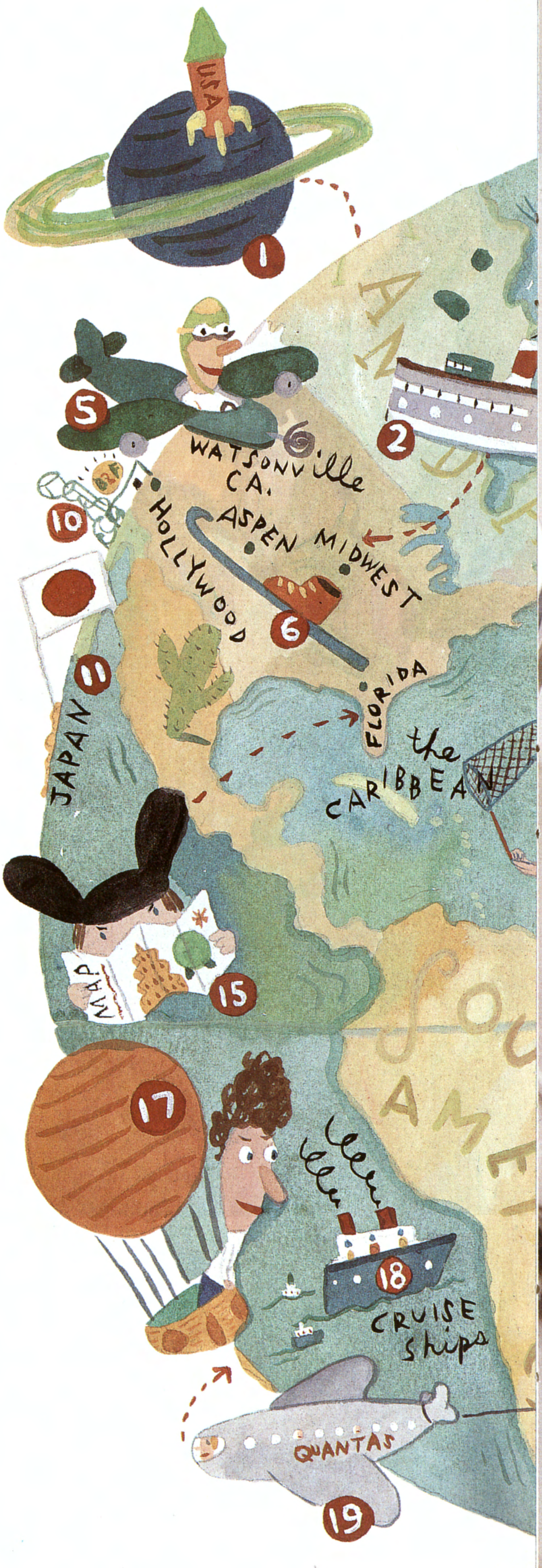
virtual **TRAVEL**: around the world in 20 ways

Forget **Lonely Planet**. Take a spin through the World Wide Web, where you can soar above the clouds one minute and deep-sea dive the next.



1. SATURN Space out and count the rings at the Saturn page *{http://www.c3.lanl.gov/~cjhamil/Solar System/saturn.html}*.

2. MIDWEST Cruise down rivers aboard the S.S. Cherokee Belle, the Internet's first virtual steamboat *{http://www.acy.digex.net/~capnmark/home.html}*.

3. FRANCE Before you jet off to Paris, browse *toute la France* online in French—or English—at FranceOnLine *{http://www.france.com/}*.

4. MOSCOW Strap yourself in and blast off: Learn to fly a real MiG–29 in Moscow *{http://www.mig29.com/mig29/}*.

5. NO. CALIFORNIA Soar across Northern California in an antique biplane with Wings over Paradise *{http://deeptht.armory.com/~zap/adverts/wop.html}*.

6. ASPEN With photographs, history and current events, Aspen Snowmass OnLine *{http://www.aspenonline.com/aspenonline/}* brings you the lowdown on where to eat, sleep, ski and party in this Rocky Mountain ski resort.

7. SPAIN View paintings by Picasso, Dali and others at the On-line Spanish Art Sampler *{http://www.cber.nih.gov/spain/art.html}*.

8. GERMANY Drink your way through the beer halls lining Wirstbundenstrasse during the Munich Oktoberfest *{http://www.bavaria.de:80/Munich/}*.

9. HIMALAYAS Travel to Tibet *{http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVLPages/TibPages/Travel/travel-faq.html}* or hike the Himalayas *{http://www.gorp.com/abvclds.htm}*.

10. SO. CALIFORNIA Travel through space and time on the interactive *Back to the Future* game at MCA/Universal's Cyberwalk Web *{http://www.mca.com}*.

11. JAPAN Journey to the land of sushi and samurai at Japan Travel Resources *{http://silkroute. com/silkroute/travel/rsrc/jp.html}*.

12. CARIBBEAN Island hop at the Caribbean Travel Roundup newsletter *{http://www.digimark.net/rec-travel/caribbean/travel-roundup/CTR-Index-92-93.html}*.

13. AFRICA Get away from it all on a safari in Kenya or shooting down the Snake River at the Outdoor Adventure Online *{America Online, Keyword: OAO}*.

14. ITALY Find historical information and a travel guide at the Virtual Vatican *{http://www.christusrex.org/www1/citta/o-Citta.html}*.

15. FLORIDA Find maps, operating hours, showtimes and other info about Disneyland, Walt Disney World, Tokyo Disneyland and Disneyland Paris at the unofficial Disney home page *{http://www.best.com/~dijon/disney/parks/}*.

16. SUBMARINE Explore the Lost Continent with Atlantis Submarine Adventures *{http://mmink.com/cayman/atlantis/subs.html}*.

17. BALLOON Experience fear, fun and romance in a hot air balloon at Ballooning Online! *{http://sunsite.unc.edu/ballooning/}*.

18. CRUISE SHIP Rosenbluth Vacations CruiseScan *{Prodigy, Jump: Cruise Scan}* offers hot deals on cruises in the U.S. and abroad.

19. AUSTRALIA Find out what's up before you head Down Under. Get the scoop on Australia and New Zealand *{http://www.wps.com.au/travel/travhome.htm}*.

20. ANTARCTICA Party with the penguins at the Live from Antartica page *{http://quest.arc.nasa. gov/livefrom/livefrom.html}*,or book a cruise through the Gateway to Antartica page *{http://icair.iac.org.nz/tourism/index.html}*.

ARCTIC
Le MONDE
GREENLAN
3
MOSCOW
MIG 29
4
Tibet
9
Ger.
8
Oktoberfest
FRANCE
ITALY
SPAIN
VATICAN
14
7
OAO
13
KEN
12
16
Submarines
Australia
TASMANIA
20
ANTARCTICA

GUIDE BOOK

MAP YOUR ROUTE Click on the destination of your choice on the **Virtual Tourist II** map *{http://wings.buffalo.edu/world/vt2}* to read about the region's language, culture and more.

GLOBAL VIEW Few resources offer as much travel planning information as **The Global Network Navigator's Travelers' Center** *{http://gnn.com/meta/travel/index.html}*.

ONLINE AGENT Find a mega-index of airlines, cruise lines, hotels and resorts at **WebScope's Hotels and Travel on the Net** *{http://www.webscope.com:80/travel/}*.

PLANES You can get to **Eaasy Sabre**, the granddaddy of online reservation services, on most major online services, including America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy.

TRAINS Amtrak schedules are available through an unofficial network of train buffs who live to **ride the rails** *{http://www.libertynet.org:80/~dvarp/amtrak/}*.

AUTOMOBILES Rent a car through **Freeways**, Alamo's CompuServe-based reservations service *{Go AL}*.

ON THE CHEAP Travelers on a budget should check out **AESU Fare Busters** *{http://www.charm.net/~aesu/flight.html}*.

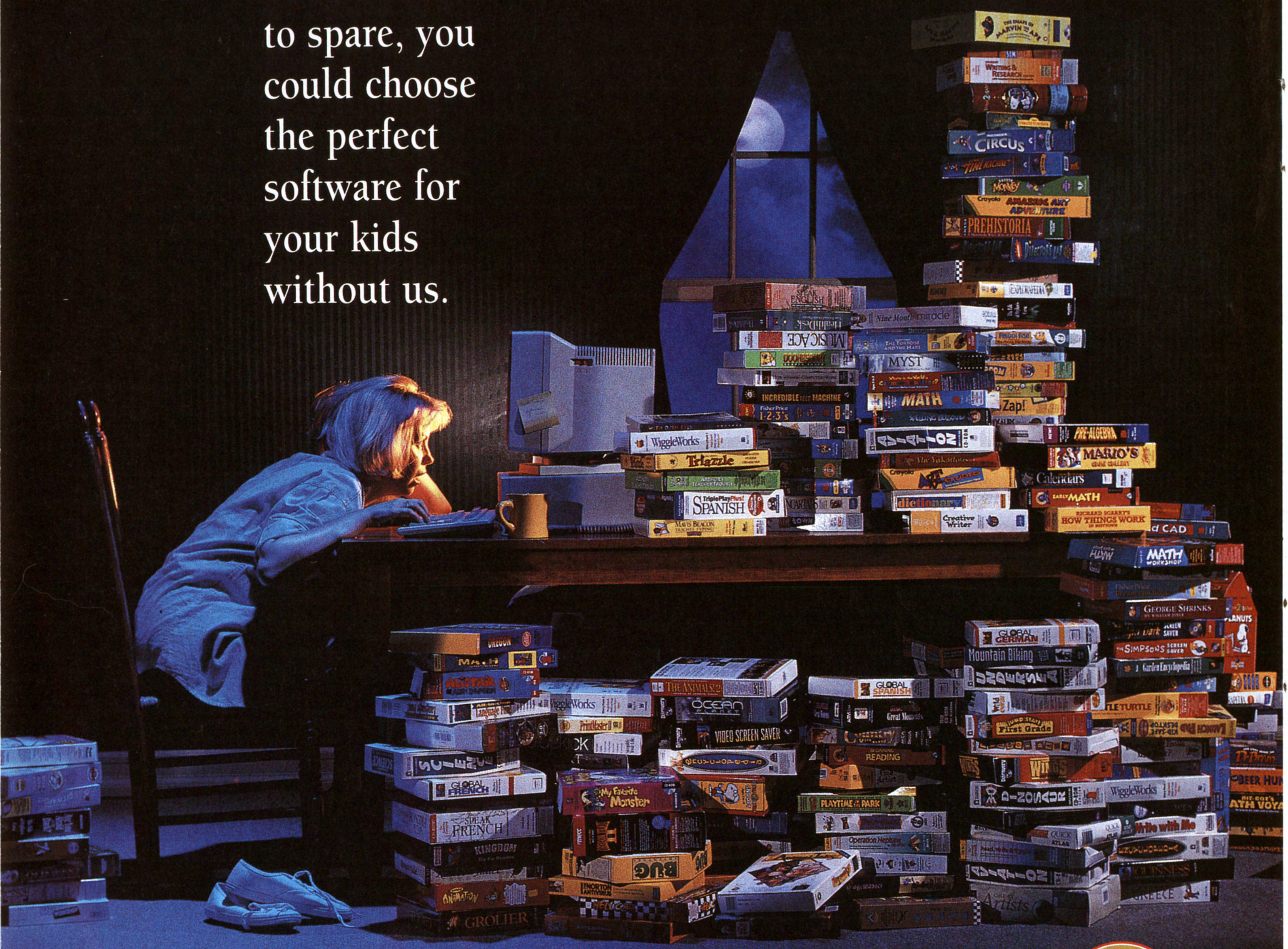
BEDDING DOWN Find a good room at the right price with **Find-a-Hotel** at TravelWeb *{http://travelweb.com/}*.

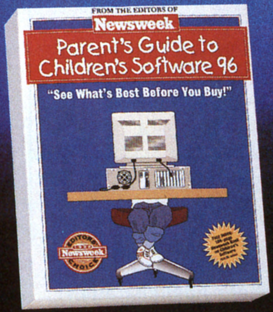
WEATHER VANE Get forecasts and temperatures for anywhere in the world from the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** *{http://www.usgs.gov/data/noaa/index.html}*.

MAIL MAD When you're in Europe and must get email, **EUnet Traveller** *{http://traveller.eu.net}* provides a home away from home, for a fee.

Illustration by Jessie Hartland

If you had $40,000 and 1000 hours to spare, you could choose the perfect software for your kids without us.




FROM THE EDITORS OF
Newsweek
Parent's Guide to Children's Software 96
"See What's Best Before You Buy!"

After all, it took thirty Newsweek writers and editors over six months to do it.

But we did it—with the help of a dozen smart kids. We clicked through nearly three hundred children's software titles selected from the thousands available, graded each one and awarded the top fifty the Newsweek Editors' Choice award.

Before you shop for children's software, you need the Newsweek Parent's Guide to Children's Software 96. It's the fun and easy-to-use CD-ROM that contains the world's first multimedia reviews of all fifty top titles — letting you experience the sound, video, animation and interactivity that makes each one work. (You'll also hear a lot more from those twelve smart kids.)

There's a special section for your children as well, with games, activities and a terrific nine-year-old host named Jazzie. There's also a 184-page book about children's software, packed with hundreds of report cards on all the titles we reviewed, presented with the crisp graphics and straightforward writing you expect from Newsweek. There's even an envelope filled with coupons worth more than six hundred dollars off top-name children's software.

So what are you waiting for? Call the number on this page. Unless you really are looking for a way to kill 1000 hours.

EDITORS' 1996 Newsweek CHOICE

SAVE $10 CALL FOR OUR SPECIAL $29.95 PRICE.

FOR AMEX, MASTER CARD AND VISA ORDERS CALL
8:30 AM-8:00 PM EST MONDAY - FRIDAY

1-800-634-3002 OPERATOR #3

System Requirements for Windows: IBM PC or compatible with a 486/25 MHz processor or higher. Microsoft Windows™3.1 or higher. 4 MB RAM (8 MB recommended). SVGA monitor with 256 colors. Double speed CD-ROM drive. 16-bit sound card (Sound Blaster compatible) and speakers. Windows-compatible mouse. System Requirements for Macintosh: 68040/33 MHz processor or higher or PowerPC. System 7 or higher. 640 x 480 monitor with minimum 256 colors or higher. 4 MB RAM (8 MB recommended, required for System 7.5). Double speed CD-ROM drive. Speakers recommended. Copyright © 1995, Newsweek, Inc. Parent's Guide to Children's Software 96 and Newsweek Editors' Choice are trademarks of Newsweek, Inc. Other brand and product names are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective manufacturers.

super sites for KIDS: child's play

The Virtual City can be a **stimulating** place for children to hang out. Guide them in the right direction—and watch the company they keep.

I was 21 when I encountered my first computer, a leviathan inhabiting the entire basement of a building at my grad school. I was intimidated, put off, frustrated.

Flash forward 14 years. My daughter, age six, and son, two, love our computer and can't remember when there wasn't one in the house. Their next step will be going online. My daughter already sends fan email to her favorite Power Ranger at the TV show's Web site. So I've been doing some homework.

Ready to dive in with us? Just remember, cyberspace is like a big city. Don't let your kids—even teenagers—wander around unsupervised. Find out where they're headed and when they'll be back.

Fun and Games A few commercial networks have created kid zones. Prodigy's *{Jump: Just for Kids}* is full of games, stories, activities, news, contests, quizzes and a chat room for the junior set. America Online's kids' area *{Keyword: Kids Only}* has astronomy and **Star Trek** clubs, comics, chat rooms, contests and gateways to fun stuff from Smithsonian, Scholastic and others.

If your kids are into crafts, they can make **stickers** and other art at Aunt Annie's Craft Page *{http://mineral.galleries.com/annie/auntannie.htm}*. Then hang their **drawings** on Global Show-n-Tell *{http://www. manymedia.com/show-n-tell/}*, a kind of virtual refrigerator door on the Web. At Kids' Space *{http://www.interport.net/~sachi/}*, they can post artwork, meet pen pals and read secret messages.

If your kids love playing Red Rover, Duck Duck Goose, Tag and other childhood staples, take them to Geof Niebor's page *{http://www.corcomm.net/~gnieboer/gamehome.htm}*, where they'll find a player's manual for those games and more. Treat them to a modern classic at Prodigy's Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? *{Jump: CarmenSandiego}*, where they play a private eye looking for a globe-trotting **super-spy**. Find collections of games like **Tic-Tac-Toe** at Boston University *{http://www.bu.edu/Games/games.html}* or through Zarf's List of Interactive Games *{http://www.cs.cmu.edu/afs/andrew/org/kgb/www/zarf/games.htm}*, which has card games, mazes, darts, word puzzles and more.

global Show
Tell

After-School Specials Take your kids to the Internet Public Library *{http://ipl.sils.umich.edu/youth/}*, to enjoy interactive books, writing competitions, a librarian and a mascot named Bookie. They'll also love CyberKids *{http://www.woodwind.com:80/cyberkids/}*, an e-zine with features, free software and a **hang-out** for the over-12 crowd. Online Children's Stories *{http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/stories.html}* lists stories on the Web, including childhood classics, **fairy tales and folklore** from around the world.

Homework help is an email away at Teacher Pager, part of AOL's Academic Assistance Center *{Keyword: Teacher Pager}*. Prodigy's Homework Helper *{Jump: Homework Helper}* allows you to search more than 500 newspapers, magazines, books, maps, TV and radio transcripts updated daily. Need an **encyclopedia**? Compton's, available on both Prodigy *{Jump:Encyclopedia}* and AOL *{Keyword: Encyclopdia}*, has more than 35,000 articles.

Direct science-minded youngsters to The Froggy Page *{http://cs.yale.edu/homes/sjl/froggy.html}*, devoted to all **things green and slimy**. See what Shoemaker-Levy 9 looked like when it collided with Jupiter at the Kids Web *{http://www.npac. syr.edu:80/ textbook/}*. Or watch the volcanoes blow their tops at VolcanoWorld *{http://volcano.und. nodak.edu/}*.

People, Places and Pets Let the world see—or hear—your cherished pet on Pet Pages *{http://www.dynamo.net/dynamo/pets/pets.html}*, an electronic photo album complete with sound clips. If your kids are feeling constructive, visit the unofficial **Lego** home page *{http://legowww.home pages.com/}* for catalogs, prices and pictures of Lego models. Then they can talk with other builders at rec.toys.lego. Finally, take the tots to Interesting Places for Kids *{http://www.crc.ricoh.com/people/steve/kids.html/}* and Uncle Bob's Kids' Page *{http://miso.wwa.com:80/~boba/}* for all-around online amusement.

Michelle V. Rafter *{michellevr@ aol. com}, a columnist for Reuters, writes about cyberspace and new technology from Los Angeles.*

TOY CHEST

DISNEYLAND Learn about new movies and test your trivia IQ at a fan's unofficial Disney stop *{http://www.best.com/~dijon/disney/}*, or visit with Pocahontas *{http://www.disney.com/cgi-bin/htimage/BVPM/Pocahantas/}*.

POWER RANGERS Write a letter to your favorite Mighty Morpher *{http://www.delphi.com/power/powrhome.html}*, see film trailers, stills and posters *{http://movieweb.com/movie/powrangr/index.html}* or page through TV episodes *{http://kilp.media.mit.edu:8001/power/homepage.html}*.

THE MUPPETS Everything you'd want to know about these cultural icons can be found on Bill Sherman's Muppets Home Page *{http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/VR/BS/Muppets/muppets.html}*. You can talk to the Muppets on the alt.tv.muppets newsgroup.

SEGA and NINTENDO Video game junkies can get their fill of trade secrets with players of Sega *{http://www.segaoa.com/}* or Nintendo *{http://www.nintendo.com}*. Talk to gamers at rec.games.video.nintendo or alt.super.nes.

THEODORE TUGBOAT Tune in the Canadian TV star *{http://www.cochran.com/tt.html}* to read an interactive story with characters from the cartoon and download the pages to color.

KIDS' SOCCER If your kids are into the original football, don't miss The Kids Soccer Home Page *{http://www.cts.com/browse/jsent/kidsoccer.html}*, written for kids by kids who play the game. Includes soccer tips and stories, pictures and soccer penpals.

MICHAEL JORDAN This online shrine to His Basketballness *{http://gagme.wwa.com/~boba/mj.html}* has game stats, commentary and photos.

They're Back To Save America From The '90s.
The Brady Bunch Movie
BLUES EXPLOSION!
dirt HAPPENS
L7
Big Brother

Yippee—or is that Yahoo? "I think it's awesome that all I have to do is type in a single word and I can find anything on the Net."

Photograph by Ken Schles

play time: SPORTS for the baggy-jean and beeper set

We went one-on-one with teenage talk-show host **Jake Fogelnest** to convince him there's more to the sporting life than bats and pigskins.

Anyone who watches SquirtTV knows what the show's pint-sized host, Jake Fogelnest, thinks of sports. Football? "Sucks," says Jake. Baseball? Jake's bored even before the final bars of the national anthem. Basketball is OK, but only because it's kinda cool that Dennis Rodman "got" Madonna. But surely he likes skateboarding? "Does that count as a sport? I don't know."

One national pastime Jake has taken up is Web crawling. "It's really friggin' cool," raves the 16-year-old, who should know. His hipper-than-thou public access show—a kind of real-life *Wayne's World,* taped in his downtown Manhattan bedroom—is so hot that MTV producers are reportedly talking to Jake about doing a version of SquirtTV for them.

In the meantime, he's busy exploring the latest media frontier, where in true renegade fashion he shuns corporate "infomercial" pages, like Planet Reebok, in favor of more happening sites, like skateboard.com. While Jake swears the only sport he can tolerate is bass fishing, we tried to interest him in some other sites designed to appeal to today's youth.

Inside outside Where can you find steady-cam and aerial footage of butt-busting mountain bike trails, transcripts of cyclist Greg LeMond reporting directly from the Tour de France, and photographs of an all-female triathlon? Or a guide to eight secret national park getaways? At Outside Online *{http://web2.starwave.com/outside/}*, the place to be for the inside scoop on mountaineering, hiking, cycling, and water and snow sports. You'll also find news, chat, letters to the editor, links to Usenet newsgroups and expert forums on everything from hantavirus to forest fires.

Free falling Of all the suicidal sports ever invented, arguably the most deranged is BASE (Building, Antenna, Span and Earth) jumping, which is kind of like skydiving but with a shorter drop and less protection. Experience the thrill secondhand at Doug Blane's home page *{http://ep.open.ac.uk/~doug/features/base.htm}*, where you can see pictures of Russell Powell hurl himself off the 102-foot St. Paul's Cathedral in London in the lowest BASE jump ever. (He made it.) For more drop zone excitement check out the Skydive Archive *{http://www.afn.org/skydive/}* for links to organizations like the Australian Parachute Federation, the FAA and an FAQ file for skysurfing.

World games It used to be that athletes competed in the Olympics wearing nothing more than a laurel wreath and a smile, but times have changed—so much so that next year's Fencing Team has new uniforms designed to be more "telegenic." You can learn this and other fun facts at the Official Guide to the 1996 Games *{http://www.atlanta.olympic.org/}*, a complete source for ticket; schedule, hotel and venue information for Atlanta's moment in the sun.

Skate punk Ollieing, funbox, vert, kickflipping, tailsiding. If these words mean anything at all to you, head straight to skateboard.com *{http://skateboard.com}*. There you'll find contests, a calendar of upcoming events, a list of skateboarding organizations (including one in Russia) and skate parks worldwide, and links to newsgroups and other skateboarding sites. Even Jake thinks it's cool.

Shyamala Reddy *{shyreddy@aol.com} is a staff writer for* Virtual City.

Kids, is there anything special you want to see this weekend?
Yeah, we want to see what it's like to be brain surgeons, world leaders, fashion designers, astronauts, marine biologists, movie stars, world travellers, and Madame Curie.
It's settled. We're going to ComputerMania.

Broaden your horizons with the latest computer stuff at our fully interactive event.

ComputerMania™ is the only place on earth where mom, dad, and the kids can try, learn, and buy thousands of delightful, adrenaline-inducing hardware and software products from the powerhouses of the industry. In fact, hundreds of great companies will be on hand, like Microsoft,® Ziff-Davis, Hewlett-Packard, Newsweek, Broderbund, Egghead, and Knowledge Adventure. And there's more. Like ComputerMania's four interactive learning zones. The Kids and Family Funhouse, Gear Gallery, Online Community, and Games Arena will surely satisfy everyone from eager parents to web wizards to multimedia mavens to power users. It's the kind of eye-opening, hands-on experience the entire family is looking for. And it's just around the corner.

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diary of a mad household: HOME alone online

Wake up. Get out of bed. Drag a comb across your head. Go downstairs and fall apart. It's just another **day in the life**—somewhere in the Virtual City.

8:17 AM: Oversleep. Blame bedmate's jackhammer snoring for keeping you awake into the wee hours. Hide the fact that it was your chronic snooze-button abuse that accidentally set clock back an hour and a half. Wait until you hear shower running to consult **atomic clock** *{gopher://time_a.timefreq.bldrdoc.gov:13/0}* for correct time. Sheepishly reset bedside unit.

8:30 AM: Scan **headlines** on America Online *{Keyword: News}* while family gripes about missing trains, buses, meetings and algebra tests. Pay attention only when you realize they'll be taking the car, leaving you stranded. Refuse to pack lunches. Sulk over **coffee** *{http://www.temple.edu/~ghinkle/java.html}*.

8:55 AM: Listen with ill-disguised amusement when S.O. calls from car phone to bemoan drive-thru mishap involving chocolate milk and cherry danish. Promise to consult the **automotive** forum on CompuServe *{Go Auto}* for tips on cleaning buff-colored, hand-tooled Italian leather interior.

9:05 AM: Begin **exercise** regimen today. Embark on sets of eyelid crunches and jowl lifts recommended by the Professional Face Muscle Enhancement program *{http://www.covesoft.com/crcabney}*. Feel the burn.

9:12 AM: Pretend to sympathize when you get second distraught call from car phone. Aggravate gridlock-induced commuter anxiety with **rush hour** updates from other cities *{http://www.yahoo.com/Economy/Transportation/Traffic_Reports/}*. Say things like "Be thankful this isn't Seattle, you'd be stuck on I-5 behind a jack-knifed semi right now," and "Too bad you're not in Houston, traffic on Highway 6 is moving between 45 and 50 miles an hour."

9:25 AM: Recoil in horror when you realize those aren't raisins in your cereal. Surf the Net for online **exterminator** listings, but come up empty. Find alternative: if-you-can't-beat-'em-eat-'em approach at entomology site *{http://www.public.iastate. medu/~entomology/InsectsAsFood.html}* teeming with recipes for delicacies from Bug Blox to Banana Worm Bread.

11:05 AM: Find yourself in the **backyard**, inspired by Time Life's Virtual Garden Project Directory *{http://www..pathfinder.com/@@rq405AAAAAAAALAM/vg/TimeLife}*. Neglect to notice the mound of roots you're trying to clear out of prospective cyclamen bed is in fact a fire ant hill.

11:06 AM: Run into the house screaming, covered with warrior ants and rising red welts. Apply ice and steroid ointment to affected areas, suggested by CompuServe's **medical reference** giant, the Health Database *{Go HLTDB}*. Meditate on peerless beauty of indoor plants.

12:20 PM: Notice that the house seems very quiet. Miss curtain-shredding, worm-ridden excuse for a quadriped that disappeared last week. Fill the void with virtual **pets** like Michael Witbrock's celebrated cat *{http://queer.slip.cs. cmu.edu/cgi bin/talktocat}*, who receives voice-synthesized messages sent on the Net from both imbeciles ("Cats rule, dogs drool") and inquisitors ("Would you buy Whiskas?").

1:45 PM: Slaver over Godiva Chocolatier's home page *{http://www.godiva.com}* until driven to consume entire pint of Mocha Almond Fudge while standing in front of open freezer. Battle sugar blues and ice cream headache. Wallow in self pity in alt.support.diet, but find other **calorie counters** unsympathetic to chocoholic excess.

2:20 PM: Flirt with idea of **working** for a living. Grow nervous about prospects after chancing upon index of companies requiring "Human Quality" screenings, including infamous urine tests, published by the Piss List Home Page *{http://rafferty.com:80/~piss/}*. Try to improve odds by confessing checkered past to the Digital Priest *{http://anther.learning.cs.cmu.edu/priest.html}*.

2:30 PM: Abandon job hunt after finding irresistible Hammacher Schlemmer site on AOL *{Keyword: 2Market}*. Order heated towel stand and Androscoggin sheepskin slippers in quantity. Continue to recklessly beam Gold Card number to dozens of merchants found in online malls on CompuServe *{Go SM-31}*, AOL *{Keyword: Marketplace}* and the Internet *{http://www.mecklerweb.com:80/imall/}*.

3:30 PM: Brace for afterschool onslaught. Lull rug rats into beta-wave trance with Disney **videos** and Sega Genesis **games** recommended by AOL's Critics' Choice *{Keyword: Critics}*, a guide on what to rent, watch and play.

4:15 PM: Ponder **dinner**. Search Usenet recipe archive *{by pointing gopher client to ashpool.micro.umn.edu}* by cross-linked list of ingredients. Play stump-the-database with combos like "goose livers and maraschino cherries," and "kippers, caperberries and a wheel of brie."

6:30 PM: Ply frazzled breadwinner with some **wine** bought through master sommelier Peter Granoff's Virtual Vineyards *{http://www.vir tualvin.com}*. Commit cardinal sin of drinking pinot noir and eau de vie from the same glass.

7:45 PM: Remember that dinner went into the oven three hours ago. Browse Zagat **restaurant** listing on CompuServe *{Go Zagat}* as better half douses charred chicken remains with fire extinguisher. Post abashed question for editors of *The Family Handyman* *{Go Handym}* about best way to salvage soot-and-foam-covered wallpaper.

10:40 PM: Wish you had heeded helpful premonitions from Real Astrologist Rob Brezsny *{http://www.butterfly.net/astro/}* when you checked your **horoscope** this morning. Listen next time he tells you stay in bed with the covers pulled over your head.

Shyamala Reddy *{shyreddy@aol.com} is a staff writer for* Virtual City.

have FUN, FUN, FUN (till your daddy blows your modem away)

We asked comedy-magic sharp shooters **Penn & Teller** about the allure of the perfect computer, email seduction and lonely hotel rooms. Plus. . .we show you where to have fun online.

Virtual City: Despite the violence you do to them, you really love your computers. How did that happen?

Teller: When I was a kid, I went to the Franklin Museum of Science in Philadelphia. On the ground floor was an electronic brain named Univac, a machine they said could think. They told me that such machines might someday enable us to visit other galaxies and cure all disease. And in the next 35 years we landed on the moon, sequenced DNA and scanned the brain with positron emission tomography. Then around 1985, we got involved with microcomputers, suitcase-sized gadgets that could out-calculate Univac.

Penn: That was the year I promised myself that if we got good reviews when we opened on Broadway, I'd buy myself a computer and a guitar. We got raves, and I bought a Kaypro laptop and a Richenbacher bass guitar.

Teller: Now we've used computers to write two books and innumerable articles, sometimes collaborating with one another from opposite ends of the country.

Penn: I never wrote anything before I got a computer. Now it's a big part of how I earn my living—and how I live my life.

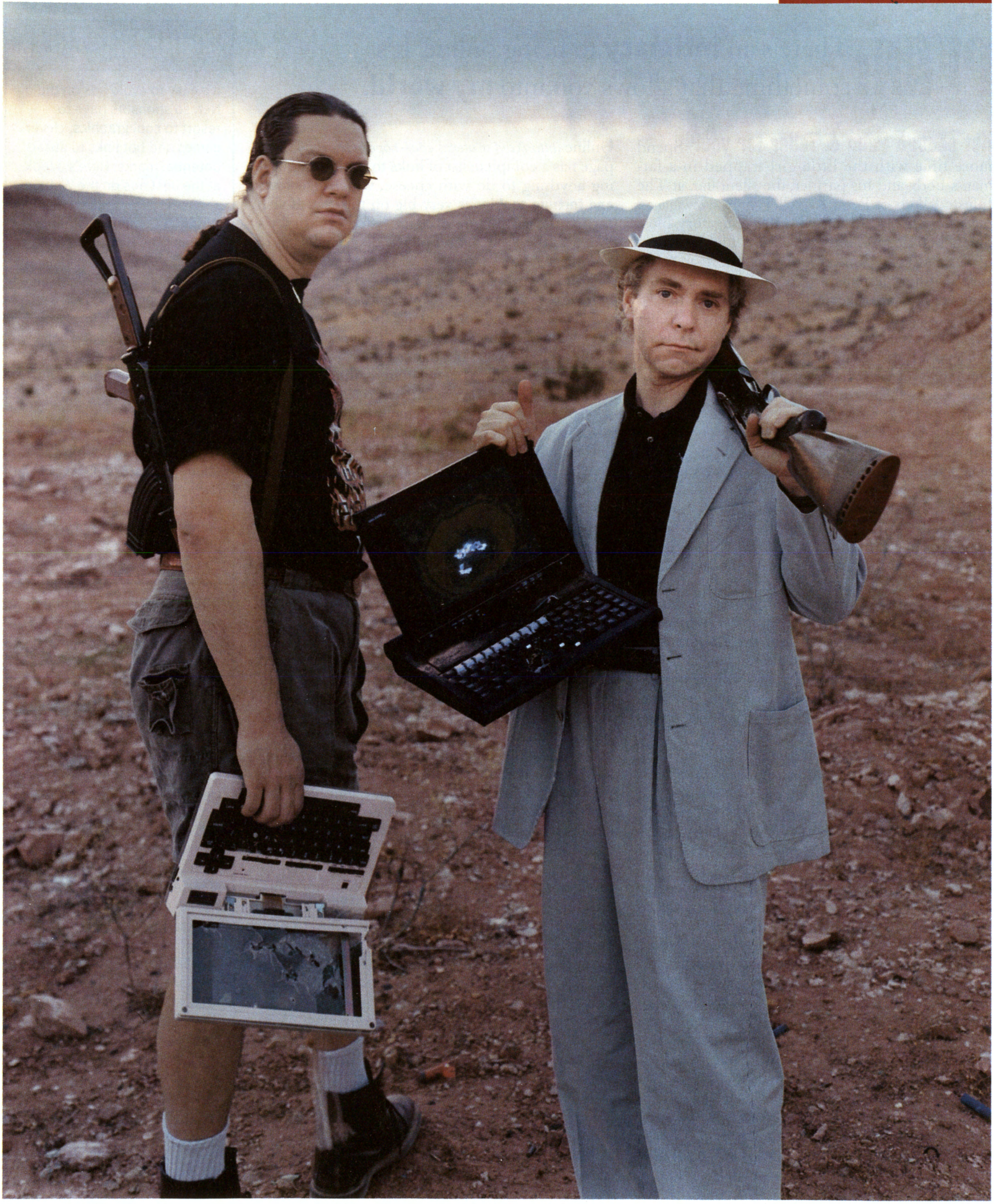
Teller: The next book we write will be handed to the publisher designed and scanned onto disk.

Penn: You know, I could never understand when an artist would tell me he loved the feeling of paint on his hands, or a guitarist would say she felt great just holding the guitar. But when I started using a computer, I understood. I like sitting at a computer. I like the glow of the screen, the modern feeling of the keyboard. I will sit at a computer when I have nothing else to do, and it makes me feel like writing.

Virtual City: You're famous for staying in touch with friends and fans by email. What's the appeal?

Penn: One reason I love email is that I love the carefully chosen word. But there's also an immediacy to being online that's great. An odd kind of time-shifting takes place. You get your messages when you want to, not when someone calls. It's more intimate too. When you write a letter, it's your stationery, your typeface, your stamp. But when it's email, your words come up on *my* screen—in the color I've chosen, in plain text, in the place where I've seen my own most private thoughts. A lot of people talk about virtual sex online, but I find email itself has an intimacy that's very seductive.

Teller: You know, we travel like mad to do our show. And we run our business office daily from wherever we are—via our in-house email system. After hours, when we've finished working, we log on. Then even the bleakest hotel room in the dullest town is full of smart, funny people.



Penn: "That's us—the right tool for the right job."
Teller: "And big guns to deal with wayward laptops."

Photograph by Ken Schles

PENN: There's an **intimacy** to being online. It's something that allows you into **my world.**

Not enough Penn & Teller for you? Spend more time with the little-girl-trapped-in-a-fat-man's-body and his partner, the silent liar, at The Infested Web of Penn & Teller *{http://www.solinas.com/penn-n-teller/}*. Along with the obligatory bios, tour schedules and interviews, you'll find pictures of Penn's house under construction, **hear Teller speak**, and experience the real-life thrill of being run over by Penn's Ford Bronco, Pink Death.

But like any good Web site, the Penn & Teller page is more than a sum of its parts—it's also a massively linked window into a wider world of online weirdness where you click a link and take your chances. Fans of *Penn & Teller's How to Play with Your Food,* for example, should start with The Flaming Pop-Tart Experiment page *{http://www.umich.edu:80/~gmbrown/tart/}*, a chronicle of one man's attempt to reproduce Dave Barry's famous toaster pastry combustibility experiment, including a picture of the fiery **moment of truth**.

From there, hop to the Pop-Tart page's host site, the Edge of Sanity *{http://www.mich.edu:80/~gmbrown/}*, where the interested will find **more Dave Barry** links like alt.fan.dave_barry, and the Miami Herald's Super Bowl site with Dave's practical guide to the game. But first check out another Edge of Sanity-linked site, the LaughWEB *{http://www.misty.com/laughweb/}*, for an encyclopedic collection of frequently offensive humor, including jokes about politics, rednecks, Spam and Barney, as well as an evergreen list of yo' mamas, flames and other **all-purpose insults**.

When you've exhausted LaughWEB's possibilities, explore its links to other whimsical Web sites, like the Toxic Custard page *{http://www.forthnet.gr/humour/tcwf/ToxicCustard.html}*, an aptly described "home of **doubtful literature**." You'll find five years worth of inspired lunacy, including a complete Toxic Custard history of the world.

The best thing about the Toxic Custard page, aside from its eye-bending graphics, is its link to Yahoo's comprehensive collection of fun sites, including the anagrams page and As the Web Turns, cyberspace's **first soap opera**. But have-to-know-it-alls should hop to Mr. Smarty Pants' *{http://www.auschron.com:80/mrpants/}* home page, hosted by the *Austin Chronicle*. Here you'll find irrelevant—and unconfirmed—trivia like the fact that Duluth's erstwhile NFL team was called the Eskimos, or that Kellogg's Corn Flakes was invented to combat onanism.

From Mr. Smarty Pants you can jump to other indispensable linkfests, like the Centre for the Easily Amused. But first check out Global Cheese Online *{http://ccwf.cc.utexas.edu/~hope/index.html}*. This page has a complete list of links to everything having anything to do with cheese, which like **cows and fortune cookies** is very big on the Net. It also earned the distinction of being listed on Mirsky's Worst of the Web, a kind of Mr. Blackwell's list of Web pages.

You may or may not be surprised to find a link to the Surrealism Server *{http:/pharmdec.wustl.edu/juju/surr/surrealism.html}* on Global Cheese Online. Its best feature is the **Compliment Generator**, which gushes things like "Flies dance operas to your wisdom." When you've been flattered enough, hop to the DADA Server *{http://sp1.berkeley.edu:80/dada. html}*, where newcomers are unceremoniously told "if you came here to find out what it's all about, get lost."

The DADA Server has a link to the infamous Useless Pages *{http://www.primus.com/staff/paulp/useless.htm}*, where among hundred of links with self-evident appeal—Blah! and The Paper Clip page, for example—you'll find the endearing Blue Dog Can Count *{http://kao.ini.cmu.edu:5550/bdf.html}* page. (Hook up your sound card for this one.) From there, travel to PiGWeb *{http://www.pigweb.com}*, which features a list of **Top 100 Obscure Road Trips** in America along with a collection of digital art, movie reviews and O.J. commentary.

PiGWeb has hundreds of links, the most prurient of which is Euronet's Erotic City *{http://www.euro.net/5thworld/erotic/erotic.html}*, where if you've got the **e-cash**, you can buy whatever—and we do mean what*ever*—you want.

From Erotic City, you can travel to the Paranoia page, dedicated to "freedom of thought and eclectic interests on the Internet," and famous for its links to the World Wide Weed drug information server and the radically tasteless Church of Euthanasia. But before you escape Paranoia, visit the Asylum *{http://www.galcit.caltech.edu/~ta/ cgi-bin/asylhome-ta}*, where the inmates take insanity polls, answer random questions and create strangely beautiful **Lite Brite art**. There's no telling where you could end up at The Asylum—its Revolving Door lets visitors add and remove links at will, so the list of hot sites is never the same from one hit to the next.

If you do find, as we did, an Asylum link to Penn & Teller's Infested Web, you should hop back to the beginning just for the pleasure of having the Web's first **card trick** played on you. Be prepared to take off your clothes.

Shyamala Reddy *{shyreddy@aol.com} is a staff writer for* Virtual City.

TELLER: Spending time online every day... If this is addiction—well, **viva addiction!**

COMMERCIAL BREAK

It's easy to avoid ads on the Net, so sponsors have to resort to **cool graphics,** clever games and **hot links** to attract potential marks. Here's a look at the best ads on the Web.

WHEELS Commune with hog lovers at the **Harley-Davidson** site *{http://www.hdstamford.com}*, and find a list of upcoming rallies and tours.

DEALS Find a gold mine of photographs and stories about the old frontier at the **Wells Fargo** site *{http://www.wellsfargo.com/index.html}*.

CALLS Brush up on Net etiquette at **1-800-COLLECT** *{http://www.organic.com/1800collect/index.html}*, home of PolitenessMan, where you'll also find a guide to Net terms and acronyms.

BREWS Pull yourself a pint at the **Guinness** home page *{http://www.futurenet.co.uk/guinness/Guinness.html}*.

MALTZ Raid a digital fridge and indulge in Harlequin-style vignettes involving suntan oil and clear malt beverages at the **Zima** site *{http://www.zima.com/zadult.html}*.

SNEAKERS Get sucked into orbit at **Planet Reebok** *{http://planetreebok.com/reebokhome.html}* for information about special events, fitness issues and worthwhile causes.

BOXERS The most fun you can have while still in your underwear can be found at the **Joe Boxer** site *{http://www.joeboxer.com:80/elastic.html}*.

BOOZE Stop by for some down-home comfort at the folksy **Jack Daniels** site *{http://www.infi.net:80/jackdaniels/}*, where you can explore the mysteries of charcoal mellowing, learn the right way to taste whiskey and see a picture of the oldest woman ever to appear in *Playboy*.

Getting on the Internet no longer requires the following hardware:

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For more information call **1-800-469-0399.**

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Private Faces, Public Spaces

A guide to the habits and haunts of six cyber-egos

By Shyamala Reddy

The Jock

Runs, rappels, hikes, **spelunks and bungees**, all in the same day. Then stops clicking the remote just long enough to log in.

Sweet Spot: Addicted to CompuServe's **Sports Illustrated** site *{Go SIMagazine}*, which features SI articles, as well as links to other resources.

Scoreboard: Frequently checks **ESPNET** *{http://espnet.sportszone.com}*, for up-to-the-minute basketball, football and hockey scores.

Monday morning: Gets immediate gratification in America Online's **Grandstand** *{Keyword: Grandstand}*, discussing **latest games** in chat rooms.

Sport of kings: Catches up on all things **equestrian** on AOL's horse racing and riding message boards *{Keyword: ABCTrack}*.

Iron man: Indulges athletic fantasies by frequenting swimming, running and cycling in Compuserve's **Health and Fitness** forum *{Go Goodhealth}*.

Tee time: Checks Lanier's **golf guide** on CompuServe *{Go Golf}* for pertinent information on courses and resorts worldwide.

Trail mix: Uses GORP *{http://www.gorp.com}*, the Great Outdoor Recreation Pages, for information on **parks**, global travel and more.

Hall of Fame: Searches for broad sports **background** in the all-purpose WWW Virtual Library **Sport** page *{http://www.atm.ch.cam.ac.uk/sports/sports.html}*.

Scores and scoring: Goes one-on-one with other **athletic singles** through the Sports and Social Clubs *{http://www.social.com/social/club_listings/main.html}*.

Bookie in a box: Makes things interesting by placing **off-shore bets** with bookmakers at the UK-based Langfield Associates *{http://www.unet.com/langfield/bet.htm}* or on WagerNet *{http://www.vegas.com/wagernet/}*, located in Belize, where anything goes.

The Suit

Buttoned-down business-class type. Deal maker, **infoholic**, ulcer patient. Laptop, pager and cell phone surgically attached.

Trading places: Hones investment strategy at the Security APL *{http://www.secapl.com}* site, where the money is funny, but the up-to-the-minute stock quotes and **portfolio management** tests are real-world.

Secret weapon: Uses **fax machines** to access Web pages, thanks to the Universal Access WebFax Server *{http://www.ua.com/webfax-instructions.html}*, by dialing up and following voice instructions to have Web sites faxed right to the desktop.

Expensive account: Runs up enormous connect-time charges using notorious **LEXIS-NEXIS** database, now accessible through the Web *{http://www.lexis-nexis.com/}*, for everything from corporate credit reports to legal advice.

Ticker to ride: Could check stock quotes on AOL's **StockLink** *{Keyword: Stocks}* or the Web *{http://www.quote.com}* or *{http://www.onr.com/stocks.html}*, but likes Prodigy's Market Update *{Jump Business/Finance}* best.

One-minute manager: Gets **advice** from columnist Janet Attard on AOL's **Strategies for Business** *{Keyword: Business Know How}*.

Corporate mole: Tunnels into UC San Diego's Economic site *{gopher://infopath.ucsd.edu}* for information on **commodities** and industries.

Future shock: Glimpses **ahead** on the Global Business Network *{http://www.gbn.org/}*, where industry analysts and academic pundits predict where global markets are headed.

After hours: When the nearest lap dance isn't near enough, visits adult club **FlashDancers NYC** *{http://www.infoboard.com/flash/}* through its **mostly topless** Web page, which includes a variety of fantasy-oriented images and links to other clubs' Web sites.

The Lover

Thinks Valentine's Day is a state holiday. Thrives in the anonymity of cyberspace, where all **partners** are good-looking and available.

Hearts and flowers: Frequents Lucy Lipps *{http://www.cybersim.com/ lucylips/}* for **advice**, celebrity gossip and further loverly links.

Ménage à modem: Explores alt.personals.poly newsgroup for swinging **multiple encounters**.

All broken up: In more **cynical** moments, looks up Gard's bitter **laws on love** *{http://www.hials.no/~ga/love/laws.html}*.

Meat market: Advertises **charms** online through Amoreee! *{http://www. kaiwan.com/~bayers/mates.html}*, where lonely hearts post their own Web page personals.

Sure thing: Skips from alt.personals to alt.romance.chat to alt.wedding for a happy ending every time. **Kisses and tells** in alt.sex.stories.

Passion pen: Composes both steamy love letters and brutal kiss-offs with the help of the **Cyrano** Server *{http://www.nando.net/toys/cyrano.html}*, which generates personal correspondence for every mood.

Hard questions: Consults CompuServe's Human Sexuality forum *{Go HSX}* for explicit answers to **intimate questions**.

The morning after: Shops AOL's Marketplace *{Keyword: Marketplace}* to **send tokens** from 1-800-FLOWERS and Hallmark Connections.

Parlor game: Scores a hundred on the **love quiz** at the relentlessly

Illustrations by Ross MacDonald

gooey romance web *{http://www.public.com:80/romance}*, which also publishes love poems and links up with other sticky sites.

No glove, no love: Explores all aspects of **safe sex** from Yahoo's Safe Sex page *{http://www.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Sexuality/Safe_Sex/}*, which includes links to the Condom Country and The Sheath File, billed as the world's largest collection of synonyms for condom.

The Snob

Tragically hip, **culturally elite**. Knew the Web was hot when you still thought it was something you had to dust out of your attic.

In crowd: Can be found at OTIS *{http://sunsite.unc.edu/otis/otis.html}*, aka Operative Term Is Stimulate, exploring an **eclectic gallery** of images.

Bad taste: AOL's **Grateful Dead** forum *{Keyword: Dead}*. Enough said.

Inside information: Hobnobs with an international crowd of art-world **movers and shakers** on The Thing BBS *{212-431-6787}*.

Tune in: Relies on CompuServe's All Music Guide *{Go Allmusic}* for **encyclopedic reviews** on all the albums ever produced.

Club crawl: Jacks into The Deck *{http://adware.com/adware/ad ware.html}* for the latest **night moves** in New York, Seattle, Dublin and other hot spots around the world.

Immaterial world: Meditates on the mystical and the obscure at the School of Wisdom *{http://www.webcom.com:80/~metanoic/wisdom}*, where disciples study such **highbrow enigmas** as the Enneagram and the Significance of Number.

Grapevine: Impresses friends with obscure knowledge of tannins and punts, thanks to AOL's **Wine** Dictionary and WineBase *{Keyword: Wine}*.

Continental flair: Hones language skills and endures **Gallic abuse** in soc.culture.french newsgroup.

Museum guide: Checks exhibit schedules and browses the gift shop at Compuserve's **Metropolitan Museum of Art** *{Go MMA}*.

Play list: Goes straight to IUMA, the Internet **Underground Music** Archive *{http://www.iuma.com/}*, for the latest digital tunes.

The Damned

Wears black and a **permanent scowl**. Worships aliens and Anne Rice. Scuttles around online looking for kindred spirits.

Heart of darkness: Subscribes to talk.bizarre to discuss the finer points of **satanism vs. alienism**, find out if anyone has eaten human flesh, and wonder "Is there anyone else like me?"

Not that damned: Like you, thought that alt.sex.**necrophilia** was a twisted joke.

Dark secret: Belongs to private support group for **abductees** in CompuServe's UFO Forum *{Go Ufoforum}*.

Daily planet: Relies on ParaNet *{303-863-0469}*, an extensive network of BBSs and newsgroups dedicated to **fringe issues**. Also subscribes to the Mysteria BBS *{818-353-8891}* for pagan interests.

Star gazing: Uses CompuServe's **Astrology** Calculator *{Go Astrology}* to generate charts based on time, date and place of birth.

Inner space: Submits nocturnal emissions for analysis on the Web's **Dream Page** *{http://www.cs.washington.edu:80/homes/raj/dream.html}*.

Main line: Takes a walk on the wild side with the original **drugstore cowboy** at the William S. Burroughs InterNetWebZone *{http://www.hyperreal.com/wsb/}*.

Evil genius: Shirks responsibility for everything from arson to adultery with **airtight alibis** concocted with the help of the Evil Little Brother's Excuse Generator *{http://www.dtd.com:80/excuse}*.

Personal x-files: Subscribes to any number of newsgroups, including **alt.evil**, alt.necronomicon, alt.out-of-body and alt.psychoactives.

Last tango: Indulges darker priapic tastes at the **Hotel Noir** *{http://www.the-wire.com/express/hotel/}*.

The Schmoozer

Gossip, snoop, opportunist, **social butterfly**. Rubs shoulders with players and played-out alike to stay in the loop—any loop.

Hooked: Feeds on celebrity dish and tasty entertainment tidbits courtesy of **Mr. Showbiz** *{http://web3.starwave.com/showbiz/}*.

Cooked: Shuns CompuServe's Journalism Forum *{Go Jforum}*, former hot spot for **media types** to trade newsroom scuttlebutt and breaking stories, now overrun with conspiracy theorists and Limbaugh-loving cranks.

Secret source: Lurks around **Directors Guild of America** Web site *{http://leonar do.net/dga/index.html}*, scrounging the latest information on individual auteurs, their projects, and artists' rights.

Cocktail party: Puts in an appearance at The **WebChat** Broadcasting System *{http://www.irsociety.com/webchat.html}* to mingle in chat rooms and hop to newsgroups and other web pages.

Executive suite: Networks with the **masters of the universe** found on CompuServe at the Marquis Who's Who *{Go Biography}*.

Seventh Avenue: Stays abreast of the world of **rags and riches** through Fashion Net *{http://www.fashion.net/}*.

Hobnobbing: Gets hooks into celebrities, from **Mick Jagger** to Jean-Bertrand Aristide, in AOL's Center Stage *{Keyword: Center Stage}*, if she can make it past the moderator.

Book signings: Seen at **BookWeb events** *{http://www.ambook.org/bookweb/events/live.html}* for the likes of Newt Gingrich and Studs Terkel—complete with live chat and discussion groups.

Good-old-boy network: Taps into Alumnet Center for Education *{http://www.alumnet.com}* to see who's published and **who's perished** in bloodthirsty world of academe.

Backstage: Catches up with behind-the-scenes gossip and show schedules from the West End to the **Great White Way** in CompuServe's Playbill Forum *{Go Playbill}*.

Disclosure: Talks trash to all the right people in **HotChat** *{http://hotchat.tc.net/hotchat.html}*, a happening Web site for the lewd, lascivious and merely lonely.

Shyamala Reddy *{shyreddy@aol.com}* *is a staff writer for* Virtual City.

RADIO HAS NO FUTURE.

HEAVIER-THAN-AIR FLYING MACHINES ARE IMPOSSIBLE.

X-RAYS WILL PROVE TO BE A HOAX.

WILLIAM THOMSON, LORD KELVIN,
ENGLISH SCIENTIST (1824-1907)

impossible

SPACE TRAVEL IS UTTER BILGE.

SIR RICHARD VAN DER RIET WOOLEY,
THE ASTRONOMER ROYAL (1956)

no way

never

WHO THE HELL WANTS TO HEAR ACTORS TALK?

HARRY M. WARNER,
FOUNDER, WARNER BROS. STUDIO (1927)

won't

RAIL TRAVEL AT HIGH SPEEDS IS NOT POSSIBLE BECAUSE PASSENGERS, UNABLE TO BREATHE, WOULD DIE OF ASPHYXIA.

DIONYSIUS LARDNER,
ENGLISH SCIENTIST (1793-1859)

WHILE THEORETICALLY AND TECHNICALLY TELEVISION MAY BE FEASIBLE, COMMERCIALLY AND FINANCIALLY I CONSIDER IT AN IMPOSSIBILITY. . .

LEE DEFOREST,
AMERICAN INVENTOR (1873-1961)

can't

The only limitations are those of imagination

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Guide to the Virtual City

The Mouse that Roars: Bill Gates' strategy to annex the online world—colonize the desktop.

"Oh No! Mr. Bill's Moving In!"

EVEN BEFORE THE MICROSOFT NETWORK opened its doors, it had racked up a number of cyberspace firsts. It's the first online service to be owned by Bill Gates. It's the first to be built into an operating system. And it's the first to mark its birth by a confrontation with the U.S. Justice Department.

Competitors raised antitrust objections to the scheme of putting a "start" button for the new network right on the Windows 95 desktop. But for Big Bill the idea was irresistible: Other online services have labored for years to woo subscribers by blizzarding them with software packages on free-disk handouts; Microsoft would do even better by preloading its software on every new PC's hard disk. Why not build easy links between the new network and the new operating system to help people get online faster?

Customer-friendly corporate strategy or another example of the Evil Empire in action? You could argue that Microsoft is doing its users a favor by making online access an absolute no-brainer. Then again if its ends were purely humanitarian, why not simply bundle America Online, CompuServe and Prodigy software with Windows 95 and let the customer decide? As it stands, no one disputes that the Microsoft Network is well positioned to elbow past its three biggest competitors and claim its seat at the head of the online table.

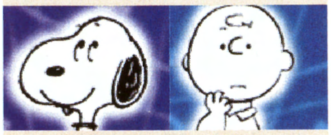
Cybermall: Go Windows shopping for Swatch, Shaq and Eddie Bauer

Yet running an online service can be more treacherous than selling computer products. IBM has struggled for a decade to turn Prodigy into a healthy business, and Apple's eWorld remains a graphically inviting but underpopulated backwater. Microsoft has already had to restrict the number of initial users to 500,000—ostensibly to test the system, but more likely to fend off unwanted antitrust scrutiny by the Justice Department.

Ideally, when Windows 95 users click on that Microsoft Network icon, they will find themselves in a vast cybermall with tenants like Eddie Bauer,

HAPPENINGS

Entertainment Drive: Chatty Cindy She may be no actress, but they promise us she can chat. Cindy Crawford will be hosting a conference on EDRIVE sometime in October. In the same month, EDRIVE celebrates the 45th anniversary of "Peanuts," with special contests, QuickTime movie downloads and photos.
{CompuServe: Go EDRIVE}



Road Trips via America Online The most popular dial-up service has devised an inventive way for members to introduce their online friends and acquaintances to their favorite World Wide Web sites while chatting together online. The host designs a "personal trip" through the Web and can invite up to 23 pals to join on the trek. Pack your bags and come along.
{AOL: Keyword, Roadtrip}

ROCK.COM Billed as the SW Network's "World Wide Virtual Party," this fall music zealots can hear and see live rock shows from around the globe with real-time exchanges of audio and video. All rock.com addicts will be encouraged to create their own gateway page, which will be an integral part of this service. It aims to create a virtual community for the musically inclined.
{http://www.swnetworks.com}

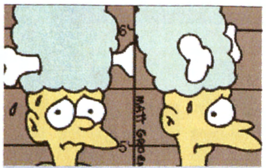
BILL GATES: DAVID MURRAY JR.; PEANUTS: © UNITED FEATURES SYNDICATE, INC.

Swatch and Shaquille O'Neal's "Shaq World On-Line." They'll be able to shop with both QVC and the Home Shopping Network, and browse information services from NBC, C-Span, Court TV, Dun & Bradstreet and LEXIS-NEXIS. The new network promises full Internet access and tight integration with the World Wide Web, and Microsoft's plans include a big online presence in Europe as well.

The success of the Microsoft Network will inevitably be tied to the fortunes of the entire new operating system. It's hard to imagine the Windows 95 juggernaut derailing, and the Microsoft Network may well make good on its no-hassles promise. But technical glitches are more the rule than the exception, and intractable snafus easily alienate customers. This is especially true of the millions of inexperienced online users that Bill Gates hopes will turn on to the Microsoft Network.

Also, online services are as much communities as they are commercial ventures, and naturally attract different crowds. Will the Microsoft Network become a hangout for nerds or nature-lovers, rockers or retirees? What if it doesn't develop any real identity—will anyone want to visit it?

All the successful services of the past—from giants like AOL and CompuServe to niche providers like The WELL and ECHO—have evolved slowly and organically, expanding as like-minded people found one another online. MSN is by far the largest experiment to date in growing an online service artificially—in an incubator. The jury's still out on whether Microsoft can conquer the online world the way it conquered the desktop. —**Scott Rosenberg** *{scottros@well.com}*



DOOOHHH!!!

Who Shot Mr. Burns? The "bullet-in-burns" update keeps players abreast of the late-breaking clues to the mystery that grips the nation. This truly hilarious homage to "Who Shot J.R.?" from the creators of *The Simpsons* will soon introduce 3-D VR walk-throughs of Bart's hometown as well. *{http://www.springfield.com}*

Block Party

Everyone—whether in a bustling metropolis or a sleepy village—loves a block party. So go ahead, invite the neighbors. Eat, drink, be merry. Listen to music. Play games. Gossip, argue about politics, trade recipes. Keep up with the Joneses—online in the Virtual City.

PLAYING AROUND

Riddler This slickly produced scavenger hunt is getting attention for its sinister design. It forces people who want the big cash and prizes—and who doesn't?—to pore over their advertisers' web pages for clues. A dastardly scheme, but the prize is right. *{http://www.riddler.com}*

URouLette With one click of the mouse, you could find yourself looking at the cyberporn you've heard so much about but can't seem to find. Or you could find yourself at the Cornell Physics lab looking at capacitor resistance diagrams. This game shoots players out into the nether regions of the Web at random. Try it—you never know when you'll get lucky. *{http://www.ukans.edu/uroulette.html}*

Where Are You? Not a spiritual question, a contest. The people at Condé Nast *Traveler* have put their popular travel quiz on the Web. The prize is a T-shirt, but the contest is usually a challenge. The gorgeous pictures are a great reminder that there's life beyond the computer screen. *{http://www.cntraveler.com}*

Mushroom Lovers Challenge Shitake, straw, portabello or morel? Send in your tastiest mushroom recipe before the end of September and you could win a savings bond worth $5,000. *{LANSHROOMS@aol.com}*

The Anagram Maker It's a tool! It's a game! It's educational! It's fun! It downloads quickly! And when you're bored, it passes for fun. It's the Internet Anagram Server. *{http://www.wordsmith.org/awad-cgibin/anagram}*

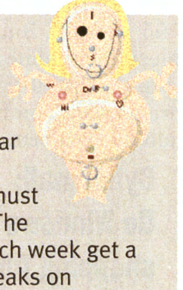
S.P.Q.R. Wander the deserted streets of ancient Rome on a quest to save the empire in "its darkest hour." (For my dime the vestal virgin seems like the one with the most sense.) Do not attempt to play this game without a 14,400 (or faster) modem, or you'll drive yourself crazy waiting for the stunning graphics to download. *{http://www.pathfinder.com/twep/rome/}*

Thalia's Funpage Visit this site for Star Trek and supermodels image identification games (easy for fans), plus a Muppet page complete with loads of Muppet links and scripts from "Pigs in Space," starring the ever-flappable first mate, Miss Piggy. *{http://www.sci.kun.nl/thalia/funpage/fun_en.html}*

Movie Studios All the major Hollywood film factories have games that debut with the premieres of their movies, including recent releases like *The Net, Johnny Mnemonic, Virtuosity* and *Pocahontas.* Check the studio's home pages for information on the newest interactive games. They also offer great prizes. Try **Paramount Pictures** *{http://paramount.com}*, **Columbia/TriStar** *{http://www.sony.com}*, **MCA/Universal** *{http://www.mca.com}* and **Warner Brothers** *{http://www.pathfinder.com}*

HUBBA HUBBA

Piercing Mildred



This somewhat twisted little game encourages players to pierce or scar Mildred (or her pals Maurice and Melvin). The only rule is that you must not let the piercings get infected. The most original piercings or scars each week get a prize. See their pierced pals in "Freaks on Parade." Some recently awarded prizes included Sea-Monkeys and mini-handcuffs. *{http://streams.com*

DOOMed From the University of Buffalo comes an exhaustive source of information about id software's gory trilogy: DOOM, DOOM II and Heretic, along with their upcoming games like Heretic II and Quake. For anything not covered in these pages, DoomGate provides links to DOOM pages throughout the Internet. *{http://doomgate.cs.buffalo.edu}* Wanna blow 'em up some more? To go head-to-head with others on the commercial services, try: **America Online** *{Keyword: PC Games}*, **CompuServe** *{Go Mtm lobby}* and **GEnie** *{Keyword: Scorpia}*.

The Contest Catalog Have you been racking up huge telephone charges downloading those fat movie files? Well, to save money, find yourself an online contest, scavenger hunt or trivia test and cross your fingers. Maybe you will be able to turn a profit from all that cybersurfing. *{http://www.catalogue.com/contest/}*

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

The Peanut Roaster This peanut store in North Carolina gives special prices to its online customers. You'll even receive a warm invitation to "come on down" and see their processing plant. *{http://www.nando.net/peanut}*

Chile Today - Hot Tamales Can't find the dried chilies or fiery gourmet sauces you crave at your local supermarket? This online store has lots of recipes for chile lovers. You can even send someone you love the "Sauce of the Month."Hot, hot, hot. *{http://eMall.Com/Chile/Chile1.html}*

Mama's Cucina Here you'll find Italian recipes, contests for trips to the "home" country and language lessons in Italian with Professore Antonio, who teaches you how to say things like "Who's in the kitchen with Dinah?" Meanwhile, Mama serves a dollop of whimsey with every helping of Ragu-oriented information. (And remember to watch this space for coupons.) *{http://www.eat.com}*

Epicurious You'll find editorial content of *Bon Appetit, Gourmet*'s wine database and mouth-watering photographs of culinary delights—the standard to beat in the food biz. Are you feeling peckish yet? *{http://www.epicurious.com}*

epicurious

Cape Breton Pictorial Cookbook From the kitchen of this well-regarded restaurant in remote Nova Scotia comes this visual feast, a delightful cookbook turned into a mouth-watering Web page. The meals are all described in detail with recipes and diet-busting photos. Bon appetit. *{http://137.186.188.131/cbcookbook/home.html}*

Frito Lay All right, so the *Joy of Cooking* it's not, but snack fanatics do love "foodstuffs." The recipes on this commercial site include a chicken fried steak with crushed Fritos sprinkled on top... Mmmmm, just like Mom used to make. *{http://www.fritolay.com}*

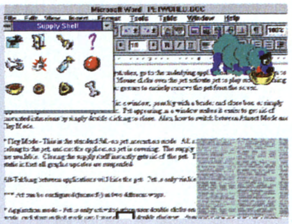
Amy Gale This wholesome-looking and definitely practical woman from New Zealand (a sample of her no-nonsense style: "This page will *not* be enhanced for Netscape") has a thorough, interesting collection of recipes buried a few levels below her top menu. *{http://www.vuw. ac.nz/who/Amy.Gale/recipes}*

Food & Drink Network This is a well-organized database of wine reviews, a wine dictionary, restaurant reviews, beer-brewing information, recipes and lots more on food and drink. *{AOL: Keyword FDN}*

Recipe Sites The Internet holds the world's biggest cookbook. From a catalog of dozens of the most well-known recipe sites to a basic recipe archive, you can find directions on how to make everything from onion marmalade to green tea brulée. Now if you could just get that 17-inch monitor to sit on the chopping block. *{http://rampages.onramp.net/~ricsmith/recipe.html}* or *{ftp://gatekeeper.dec.com/pub/recipes}*

MAN BYTES DOG

Dogz 'n the Hood



In the struggle to supplant dogs for the title of man's best friend, computers have some allies at P.F. Magic. Rob Fulop, creative director of P.F. Magic, has designed what he hopes will be the Cabbage Patch Baby for the computing crowd. "Dogz" are **computer-generated pets**—not screen savers—programmed to have a dynamic relationship with their master—the cursor.

The puppies await adoption at the P.F. Magic web site *{http://www.pfmagic.com/dogz/adopt}*. The site acts like a pound, offering browsers a variety of **breeds of Dogz** from which to choose. Potential owners are encouraged to download a sample of several different puppies before deciding which one to adopt, because no two Dogz are alike. P.F. Magic's computers promise that each puppy is generated with a distinct and individual personality. Some Dogz require different degrees of petting and training than others. Their personalities, in general, mirror those stereotypes of the breed categories they fall under; the big dogs are a little slower, and the smallest (a chihuahua that looks like a cross between **Ren and Opie**) a little brighter and perkier.

Once the papers are signed and the adoptive parent pays for the puppy, the program is permanently transferred. Then there's a new relationship to forge: The Dogz need training, food and affection. Ignore them and they'll whine. No pooper scooper required.

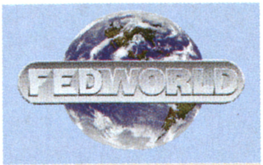
CIVIC CENTER

Ten Most Wanted The FBI page has a link to profiles of its ten most wanted criminals, although the list only had nine last time I checked. For those of you who can't get enough of TV shows like *America's Most Wanted,* look no further. The files give vital statistics of all the criminals plus useful little tips for the public on how to recognize these folks. They then end up being a weird combination of rap sheet and personal ad: Donald Webb (public enemy number 2), for example, is wanted on charges of murder and attempted burglary, but "he loves dogs, is a flashy dresser and a big tipper." The guy doesn't sound half bad. *{http://www.fbi.gov}*

The White House No one should miss the ridiculous photos of the nation's First Family and the opportunity to sign the Guest Book. *{http://www.white house.gov}*

THOMAS The Library of Congress sponsors this site, which gives a clear explanation of how a bill becomes a law, status and information about all the bills before Congress, and the full text of the Congressional Record. *{http://thomas.loc.gov}*

For politics on the commercial services, try: **America Online's** Capital Connection *{Keyword: Capital (Capital Connection)}*, **CompuServe's** political party fora *{go: Republican or go: Democrat}* or **Prodigy** *{Jump Politics}*.



EYE SPY

FedWorld Here's a cornucopia of information, from the useful to the utterly worthless. Each government agency has a large home page, but the information is, for the most part, so dully presented that one can hardly imagine it ever being classified as interactive. *{http://www.fedworld.gov}*

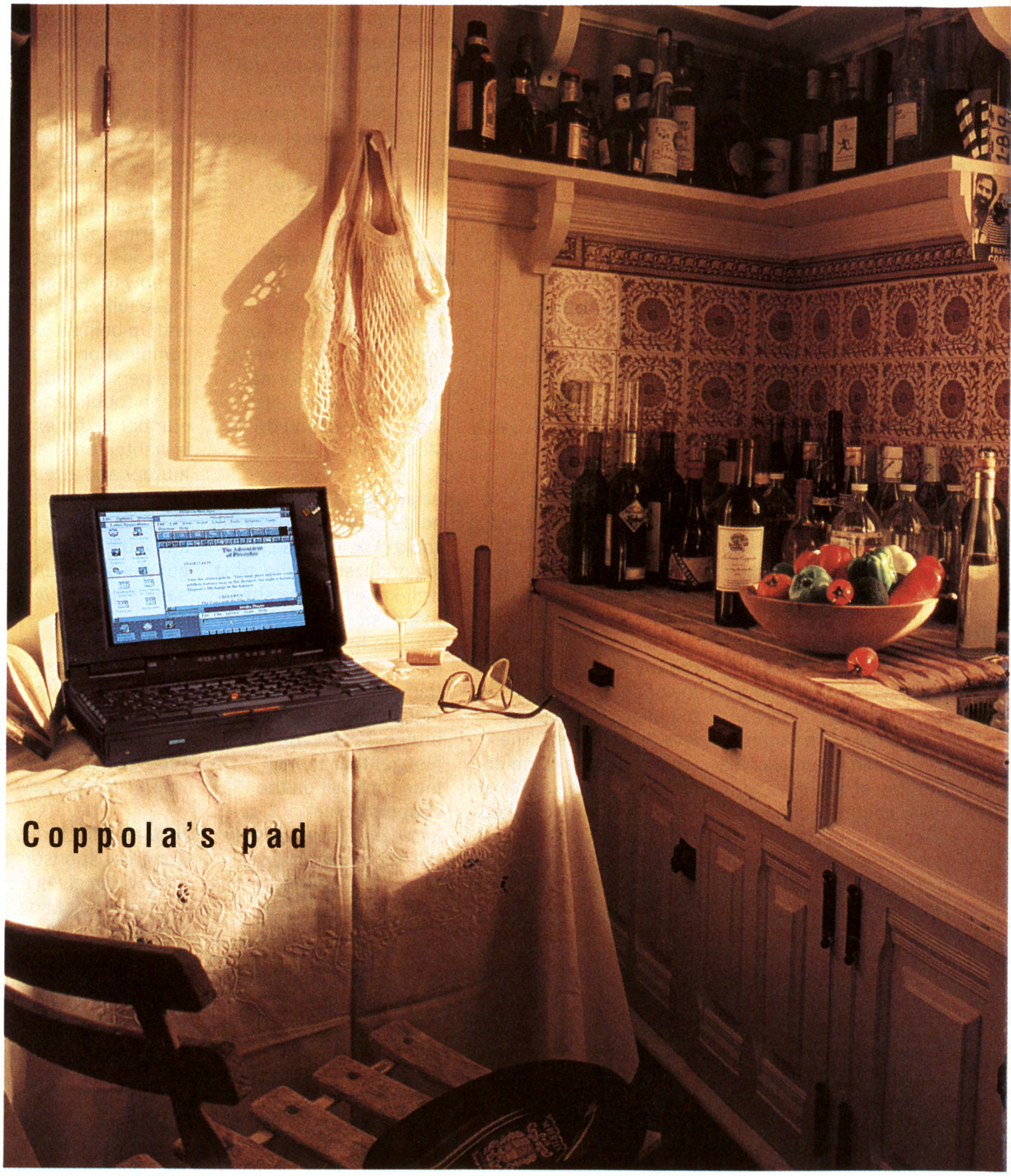
SHOPPING SPREE

Nightmare Factory Mainly a promotional site for the business of the same name based in Austin, Tex., but worth a visit to their gift shop for all your Halloween needs. One notable T-shirt for sale is the "I Killed Nicole Brown Simpson . . .and that waiter guy too." Which is not at all that funny, but apparently 10 percent of the proceeds will go to battered women's shelters. *{http://www.io.com/~nightime/}*

CDnow Browse through 150,000 CDs at this, the biggest music store on the Web. CDnow will ship your favorite discs anywhere in the U.S. They're all discounted and sent via airmail. *{http://www.cdnow.com/}*

Shopping2000 For all your consumer needs, this enormous shopping mall on the Web offers dozens of catalogs. *{http://shopping2000.com}*

Hawaiian Express Unlimited Send a beautiful bouquet of flowers to your favorite chat mate—and take a look at some other interesting gift items at this colorful site. The flowers are not the cheapest you'll find on the Internet, but they are



(*Francis Ford*) Coppola's pad

The IBM ThinkPad 755CD comes with: *Integrated 5.25″ CD-ROM, 10.4″ black matrix TFT color screen (measured diagonally), and a 3-year international warranty,* among other things. To find out where you can buy ThinkPad, call 1 800 772-2227, or for product information by fax, call 1 800 IBM-4FAX (key in ID# 1622).*

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*IBM's Statement of Limited Warranty is available upon request (call 1 800 772-2227). Available only in countries where ThinkPad is sold and serviced by IBM. Registration required. Other restrictions apply. IBM and ThinkPad are

Francis Ford Coppola's ranch, on a sweeping hillside in California's wine country, is a place that nurtures the wide-ranging interests of a creative mind. Not unlike the new IBM ThinkPad® 755CD in residence here. Although Mr. Coppola may retreat to the screening room or the research library or the bungalow to work, like many of us, he does his best thinking at the kitchen table. And now all the power of a true multimedia machine, with full-motion video and digital stereo sound, is available to him even there.

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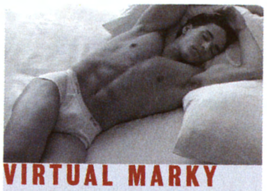
definitely the most stunning. *{http://planet-hawaii.com/~hawnexp/}*



VIRTUAL MARKY

2xist Underwear Revealing men's underwear. Do people actually visit this site to buy briefs? *{http://www.digex.net/2xist.html}*

Book Stacks Unlimited Flip through some 320,000 books. According to the Book Stacks people, 10 percent of the profits go toward literacy projects across the country. *{http://www.books.com/}*

Software.net Forget Egghead. This software distributor has something like 10,000 titles available for all operating systems. *{http://www.software.net/}*

For more shopping, check out the merchants hawking their wares on the commercial services: **America Online** *{Keyword Shopping}*, **CompuServe** *{Go Mall}* and **Prodigy** *{Jump Shop}*.

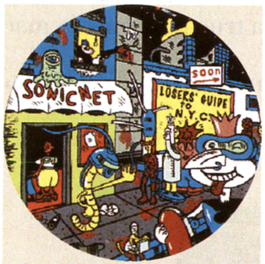
HIT PARADE

Rocktropolis This flashy little site has an 80s feel about it, long on ostentatious colors and exclamation points, but short on soul. Still, you should check it out from time to time for the chat sessions with musicians. *{http://underground.net/Rocktropolis}*

VIBEonline You'll still find some of the best graphics on the Web here, including new features, like Sound Threads, which allows your web browser to weave together original musical threads from several different artists to make a new tune. *{http://www.pathfinder.com/vibe}*

IUMA The famous Internet Underground Music Archive offers free downloads of over 500 unsigned bands' songs in several different audio formats. This is a must-have address for your bookmark file. Unfortunately, its popularity has made it difficult to access at peak hours. *{http://www.iuma.com}*

Thora-Zine Here's the hippest and nastiest of the music-oriented e-zines, with music from bands that no one with a lawyer on staff would touch, and all the articles and interviews from the print edition, including Alice Donut, 7 Year Bitch and The Jesus Lizard *{http://www.eden.com/zines/thora-zine.html}*.



SONIC YOUTH

SonicNet "Get your ASS online" as their logo so tactfully puts it. This newish web site gets attention for live chat sessions and great guests in addition to the solid content. SonicNet features exclusive online-only songs from indie and alternative bands. Tour diaries of bands are also a much vaunted aspect of this home to cybergrunge. *{http://www.sonicnet.com}*

Hitlist This list has "phat" links all over the Web, including one to the Parliament/Funkadelic's Back to the Mother Ship page, a Miles Davis Discography page and the Janet Jackson page. *{http://www.cldc.howard.edu/%7Eaja/hitlist/}*

Massive Brings This is a good source for a readable index to artists and label sites. *{http://www.massive.com}*

Spaced@The Muse *The* page for techno heads. You'll find reviews and samples of techno music and a fairly long list of parties—fun stuff if you happen to be in London. *{http://hyperlink.com/muse/spaced/index. htm}*

ChartAttack This page features links to several dozen different charts from around the world. Many of the sites have audio clips available for the songs on their charts. Very handy if your band is thinking of traveling to South Korea to make it big. *{http://www.edu.isy.liu.se/~d93andwa/stuff/html/chart.html}*

RealAudio You'll need this page if you plan on listening to all the audio clips that are online these days. *{http://www.realaudio.com}*

The Throne of Drones Here's the "Ambient Noir" music that's available from the Sombient label. Yes, you can download the sound bytes, but the real strength of this site is in its beautiful graphics. *{http://www.wilder.net/stc/sombient/throne/index.html}*

Rhino Records The beloved retro label has its own site with a catalog and an online version of their newsletter *Retroactive*. If you don't see what you want in the catalog, they ask that you help them compile future releases. *{http://cybertimes.com/Rhino}*

The Best Of
Tony Orlando & Dawn

Mad for More Music Madness Online? Try the commercial online services: **America Online,** check out SPIN Online *{Keyword: SPIN}*; **CompuServe,** take a look at *Rolling Stone* Online *{Go: RSOnline}*.

Charles Runnette *{runnette@media.net}, a veteran net-surfer, is an assistant editor at* New York *magazine.*

ALPHA WORLDS

Metaverse Made Manifest

Pack your bags and leave your forwarding address in cyberspace; the **homesteading** in Worlds Inc.'s Alpha Worlds starts this fall, and you don't want to end up having to build your "house" on the wrong side of "town." This new, multi-user, three dimensional, **Internet metropolis** is a dream-come-true for fans of Neal Stephenson's prescient novel, **Snow Crash**. It is the metaverse. At last.

Alpha Worlds incorporates many features of its highly successful predecessor Worlds Chat, the three-dimensional Internet chat web site that Worlds Inc. launched earlier this year. People will choose their avatars, three-dimensional virtual representations, and wander around chatting or playing games with other people in real time

The primary difference is the level to which the user is involved in shaping the environment. In Alpha Worlds, nearly everything depends on the inhabitants. That brings Worlds Inc. much closer to the goal of making **social computing** a reality, says Maclen Marvit, Worlds' Director of Development. They provide the space; the users create a new world.

Aside from the electronic merchants and public spaces Worlds Inc. has programmed, the look and feel of the city depends on its inhabitants: what kind of avatars they select and what types of structures they build. According to Maclen, one of the biggest surprises to come from the beta tests of Alpha Worlds was watching the inhabitants stack their houses on top of each other. Will this new world resemble **Blade Runner?** Available in mid-September for Windows. Macintosh version available later this year. *{http://www.worlds.net}*

Television By Nikki Finke

Power, sex, corruption: Online has all the stuff that makes shows like *CPW* worth watching.

Tune in, Log on, for Better TV

TONIGHT SHOW WRITER DAVE RYGALSKI HAD A BRAINSTORM: LET'S ask the audience to email pick-up lines to next-day guest Sandra Bullock, who was shilling for *The Net.* Jay wasn't sure about the bit at first. ("He doesn't own a computer," a spokeswoman said.) Then the responses poured in. Staff members sifted through 2,000 for the most smarmy. The best—"Do you prefer men with more money, more speed or more hard drive?" from Jim in Lexington, Mich.—never aired because Leno ran late. What questions did Jay broadcast? "How the hell did you look so ugly in *Love Potion No. 9?"* Luckily, Sandra giggled. Now more online tie-ins are planned.

Leno is learning what web crawlers have known for the past year—the most trenchant stuff is coming across your Sony monitor, not your Sony television. For example, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* is lame. But Conan's cybergroupies have created wacky home pages. Take the Conan O'Brien Fan Purity Test and answer the question: Which sketch sent Conan and Andy into the meat locker? Regarding Andy, the silent majority may not know him from Adam, yet he's celebrated at Andy Freak Central. A photo shows Andy as the newest KISS member, and a bio states that his TV career began as a victim of John Wayne Gacy in a *Hard Copy* re-enactment.

Even popular shows are enhanced by net friends. A *Friends* fan asks that quintessential '90s question, "What if Quentin Tarantino Wrote a *Friends* Episode?" and answers it online. On an unofficial Letterman home page, you can read the unbleeped transcript of Madonna's most infamous guest turn. Even CBS's official web site offers insight into the new series *Central Park West.* "The show is full of really good-looking characters, power, scandal, corruption, backstabbing and sex," says creator Darren Star of *90210* and *Melrose Place* infamy. "It has all the stuff that makes TV worth watching." Not unlike a typical *Ricki Lake* broadcast.

Tiffani-Amber: 31,000 visitors and counting... what's all the fuss about?

In fact, Lake's show uses its web site to solicit panelists with such traumas as "We may be identical twins...but I hate your guts" and "Are you a gay male or lesbian gold digger?" At the other end of the daytime spectrum, Prodigy's TV board produces the Genoa City News—a tongue-in-cheek, foot-in-mouth newsletter that makes a delicious satire out of *The Young and the Restless* soap opera. ("She dies—again!") And curmudgeons for whom the sound of an "I love you, you love me" strain sets off a gagging reflex can seek solace at The Jihad to Destroy Barney on the Worldwide Web site.

Sure there's a surfeit of seriousness at Vanderbilt University's Television News archive online. Or the web site where that university philosopher claims that *X-Files* is "the most subversive show to hit American television." But wouldn't you really rather be among the 31,000 visitors to *90210* star Tiffani-Amber Thiessen's unofficial home page? "Why would someone go to the trouble of creating a virtual shrine to this person?" notes the fan who made it. "Your guess is as good as mine. She sure is cute though, isn't she ???"

Overnight, the home page has replaced the fan club. "We're CyberFans and we've got more power," declared an authorized site for *Home Improvement.* In the not too distant future, perhaps, the Nielsens may go the way of Atari. "Soon you'll be able to see things online that you won't see on television," says NBC online honcho Josh Grotstein. Pssst, Mr. G., that time is now.

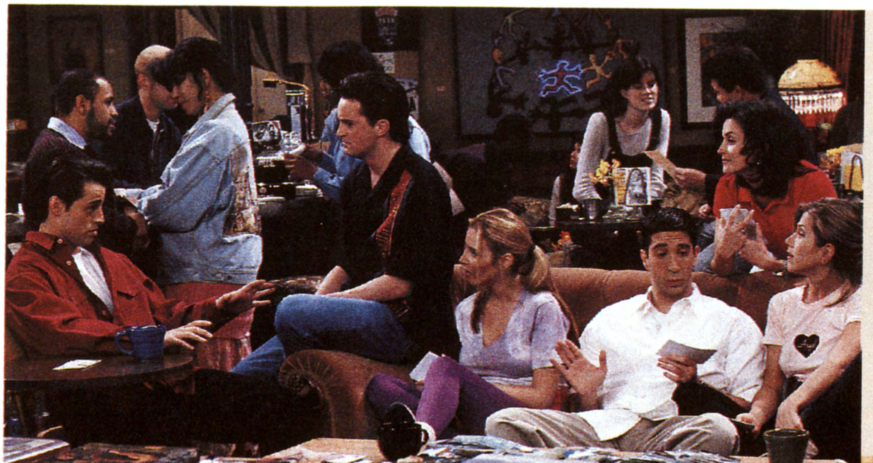
SCREEN SAVIOURS

Frasier Arf to those video bloopers by that keen canine Eddie. The people aren't bad, either. Have Dr. Crane say, "I'm listening," or hear a putdown from Roz every time you boot up. And Niles will help plan your day to the millisecond on the electronic calendar.

Melrose Place So cool—the music, the mayhem, the video of crazy Kimberly, too. Let the day planner do lunch with Amanda. And count the number of affairs Michael has on file in the trivia bank. Yikes!

Baywatch Spend the winter with a tanned lovely as your companion. These California lifeguards don't just save your screen; they save your sanity! Ask him nicely, and maybe David H. will make sure no one kicks sand in your face.

(Byron Preiss Multimedia $30)



Sitcoms TV sitcoms are supposed to be funny, right? Well, not at the networks' official web sites. What a snore. Mercifully, fans have come to the rescue. For genuine belly laughs, jump to a **Friends** home page *{http://www.cen.uiuc.edu/~jr11296/friends.html}*, where a guy with way too much time on his hands poses a hypothetical "What if **Quentin Tarantino** wrote a *Friends* episode?" He did—sort of. Actually, you can read a mini-teleplay written by a Quentin wannabe. It's called "The One Where They Get Medieval," set on Thanksgiving. It has Chandler tossing off Travolta-ish lines like, "I don't ever eat turkey 'cause it's an unclean, filthy animal."

Drama Engrossing drama may be a dying art on TV, but it's alive and well online. ABC's in-the-works web site (for now, ABC is only on AOL) *{Keyword: Television}* will highlight Steven Bochco's newest series, **Murder One,** which traces a single murder case from soup to nuts. Look for heavy board action arguing the merits of this innovative but controversial format. You can revisit NBC's **E.R.** *{http://www.nbc.com}* but CBS will heavily promote two new offerings— sexy **Central Park West** and sinister **American Gothic** on Prodigy *{Jump television}* or go to *{http://www.cbs.com}*.

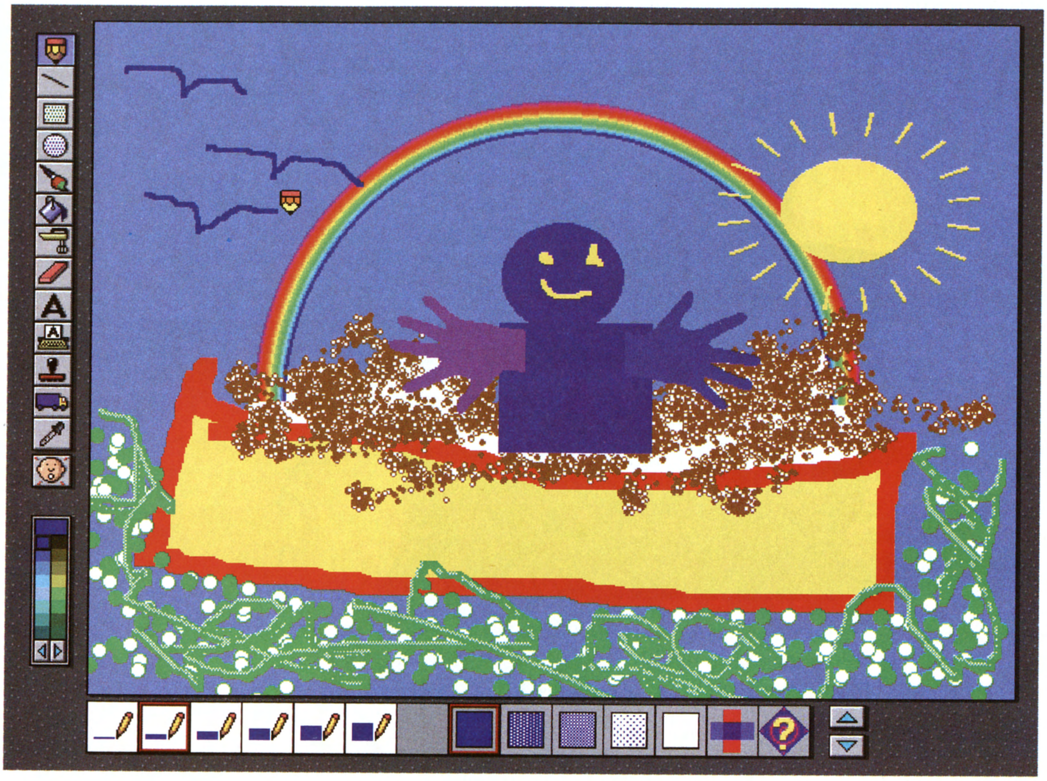
Late Night NBC has pulled out all the stops for Leno *{http://www.nbctonightshow.com}*. Every night, highlights and video clips from the **Tonight Show** are formatted and put online. Catch Jay's monologue. See the schedule of upcoming guests. Go backstage with the show. As for **Letterman,** the best stuff is fan-made. Enjoy "the excitement, the pageantry that is Dave," as one fan put it, on 16 home pages *{http://www.yahoo.com/Entertainment/Television/Shows/}*. Already, the Top 10 list-server has 33,000 subscribers,... and climbing. And if you like late, late, late night, the "first" **Greg Kinnear** home page *{http://pages.prodigy. com/NY/kinnear/kinnear.html}* has all sorts of news. Did you know Greg just purchased a new Hollywood Hills home from *L.A. Law* actress Susan Ruttan? Check it out.

Sci-Fi If you're utterly lacking in imagination, jump to the official **X-Files** pages *{http://foxnetwork.com}*. But if you're daring, visit the 26 fan home pages. Then play The X-Files Drinking Game *{http://netaccess.on.ca/~bnelson/FBI-XFD/xfls.html}*. Sip the beverage of your choice when these scenes show up: One sip if a mutant/alien/monster kills someone. Two sips if Mulder goes into a dark place alone. Four sips if an actor from **Twin Peaks** appears. And, if Mulder and Scully ever get romantic, smash your TV set.

Soaps Forget Tyson *vs.* Holyfield. The best fights break out on the soap boards. First, fans verbally sparred over the delicious absurdity of that Marlene-is-possessed storyline on NBC's **Days of Our Lives.** Now they're trading barbs over Billie *vs.* Hope. "Bo is a fool to pick Billie over Hope," one Prodigy soaper said. "Hope outclasses Billie in every department: looks, glamour, sensitivity...the hair." "I'm sorry, but *Hope* has great hair?" countered another fan, incredulous. "Her hair is stuck in the eighties. And if I hear her say anything about getting her memory back so she can get Bo, I will hurl." **Whoa—tough crowd.** Soapers from all walks of life have wild and witty slugfests on AOL *{Keyword: Television}* and Prodigy *{Jump TV BB, TV Soaps}*, as well as on the Internet *{rec.art.tv.soaps.misc}*. And for those scoops on soap strangeness planned for *Days,* check out **NBC's** destination on AOL *{Keyword: Television}* and the Web *{http://www.nbc.com}*, or the show's own official web site *(http://www.spe.sony.com/Pictures/tv/days/days.html)*.

Cable Here's a tip: First check the daily schedule on C-Span *{http://www.c-span.org}* so you can claim you were watching that riveting debate on Medicare. Then to to **Comedy Central's** web site *{http://www.comcentral.com /abfab/abfab.htm}*, where Patsy and Eddie are featured in all their decadent splendor on **Absolutely Fabulous.** Besides annotated episodes, GIF pictures and sound clips (like the Pet Shop Boys singing the theme song), the web site has cool hot links to various London attractions, including an interactive map of the city and its subway system. (Hmmm, the girls must be low on farthings.) Need more quality time with Ab-Fab? Check out the 13 different home pages designed by the show's fans

CD-ROM By Scott Rosenberg



Kid Pix Studio: Creativity tools treat children as active subjects, not programmable objects.

Software Sandboxes for Kids

Parents want kids' software to be somehow mind-improving—and they pay for the stuff. But kids, who actually use it, may shun the "educational" label like Brussels sprouts.

Always innovative, the software industry has cobbled together a new word to make everyone happy. Buy a kids' CD-ROM during this back-to-school season and, chances are, it will be categorized as "edutainment." My language-loving seventh-grade teacher—whose own theory of edutainment involved tossing super balls at the classroom's back wall to keep us awake—taught us the name for such coinage: "portmanteau words," ungainly assemblages of spare parts.

The edutainment label assuages both parents and kids, but the scars between its syllables warn of the contradictions it contains. In many products, the effort to make learning fun—by, for example, yoking together old-fashioned drills with unrelated diversions—becomes an enormous strain. Here's a video game about saving the rain forest. Want to score points? You must identify sentence fragments! One company has an entire product line built around cloning classic video games like Pac Man and Donkey Kong and then mating them to old-fashioned spelling and math drills. First the vegetables, then dessert.

Edutainment: Can a kid save the rain forest by mastering grammar?

If you assume that learning and amusement are discrete and hostile activities, then learning will choke amusement and amusement will keep tripping up learning. Some software houses, grasping this, have begun to concentrate on a class of products that treat play itself as a form of education. Producers, accurately but prosaically, call them "creativity tools," but you might think of them as software sandboxes. They use multimedia computers not as TV sets capable of administering multiple-choice tests, but as virtual play-spaces inhabited by genies ready to do a child's bidding. The best of them—like Broderbund's Kid Pix Studio or Voyager's Making Music—dissolve the distinctions between fun and work, turning the screen into a tabula rasa for young imaginations to fill with drawings, stories and music.

Engaging kids' attention while encouraging their initiative, software sandbox programs expose the limitations of a catch-all phrase like "edutainment." From any vantage on the continuum between education and entertainment, whether you're a teacher or an entertainer, you're treating kids as objects. At best, sandbox software gracefully steps outside those categories and allows child artists, writers and composers to be subjects instead.

CATHY DAVIES

COMING SOON

The 11th Hour A reporter hunts for his lover through the cobwebbed mansion from *The Seventh Guest*. This sequel promises movie-like video quality and mystery galore. *{Trilobyte/Virgin}*

The Residents' Bad Day on the Midway The multimedia world's favorite incognito band, the Residents, and animator Jim Ludtke—the same folks who created *Freak Show*—cut another slice of misfit life. *{Inscape/Warner}*

Psychic Detective In a twist on the interactive-movie model, *Psychic Detective* casts you as a mind reader—and lets you hop from one character's thoughts to another's as you try to unravel a grisly mystery. *{Colossal Pictures/Electronic}*

New for Trekkies

Star Trek: The Next Generation "A Final Unity" Here's an incomparable gaming pleasure: Your mouse-click summons Captain Picard's sonorous "Make it so." This CD transports you to the Enterprise bridge and beyond, but it never abandons you there. Rather not learn the game's complex navigation and combat systems? You're free to delegate. If the faces look odd—Is that Jonathan Frakes?—be warned that the actors got to, uh, fine-tune their appearance. And since it's DOS-based, installation may require some tinkering. If only PCs understood "Make it so." *{Spectrum Holobyte, $60, DOS only}*

The Children's Hour

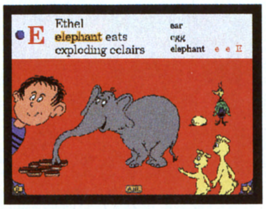
Today's CD-ROM versions of classic software "creativity tools," like Kid Pix and SimCity, offer vast libraries of options and can perform complex stunts that till recently would have demanded expensive professional-strength programs.

(All titles are available for both Macintosh and Windows except as noted.)

Kid Pix Studio Kid Pix earned its status as the best children's drawing program long ago; it has the most inviting interface, the funniest built-in-sounds and the most alluring effects. Kid Pix Studio extends the original, with wilder "wacky brushes" and new animation modules. No software will ever replace the tactile joys of finger-painting, but Kid Pix creates a new home on the computer for the art of messing around. *{Broderbund, $40, ages 3–12}*

The Amazing Writing Machine Building a software sandbox for writers is tougher than building one for artists; words are stiffer and more rule-bound than images. But the giant Rube Goldberg contraption at the heart of this CD promises frivolity as well as logic. The program offers treasuries of ideas, suggestions, rhymes and ready-made stories to soften the terror of the blank page. *{Broderbund, $45, ages 6–12}*

Morton Subotnick's Making Music What Kid Pix is to drawing, Making Music is to composition. Composer Subotnick, whose bald head appears as a comical icon throughout, omits the jazzy rhythm tracks and sonic effects of other do-it-yourself music toys. Instead, you receive an inspiring introduction to scales, harmony, counterpoint and orchestration—the bones beneath music's skin. *{Voyager, $40, ages 5–10}*



Dr. Seuss's ABCs The Doctor makes his digital debut, channeled by a pair of blobby yellow bipeds named Ichabod and Izzy. Each click brings a new torrent of exemplary alliterative verbiage (for B: "How about a big bug on a blue bed playing a banjo?"). Since the real Dr. Seuss, Theodor Geisel, died in 1991, making Seuss more of a trademark property than an active collaborator, Living Books had to take care not to disappoint his legions of fans—children, of course, but also adults weaned on his writing. Neither need worry; the work is, well, worthy. *{Living Books, $40, ages 3–7}*

Big Top's Cartoon Toolbox Starring Felix the Cat This sandbox has ready-made molds. Give up the total freedom of Kid Pix for a more limited palette featuring Felix, Poindexter and company, and in return, you receive some nifty animation tools. Of the make-your-own-cartoon programs on the market, Big Top's bag of tricks offers the most rewarding results. *(Big Top, $55, ages 7–adult)*

What's My Story? For young auteurs who'd rather work with video and sound, What's My Story? provides a library of clips to narrate, edit and score. You're limited to the subjects of the pre-shot video, like medieval village themes, Native American life and toy-store tableaux. But part of becoming an artist is learning to work with what's at hand, right? *{Digital Pictures, $37, ages 6–adult}*

SimTown Maxis has taken its classic SimCity, improved its graphics, skewed it to a preteen sensibility and turned up the whimsy knob. SimCity emphasized smart management; SimTown concentrates more on displaying a colorful canvas of a burg, down to the style of individual houses (Victorian to adobe), the nature of local businesses (burger joint to movie theater) and the inner lives of the inhabitants. *{Maxis, $40, ages 8–12}*

Recess in Greece Homer gets rewritten for each generation; today's youngsters can get their *Iliad* interactively here, as Morgan, a goof-off junior ape, gets sucked through a blackboard into the middle of the Trojan War. More cartoon than classic, *Recess* pays only lip service to the original—there's no Achilles or Hector—but it takes its liberties with brash, infectious style. *{Morgan Interactive, $35, ages 7–12}*

Science Sleuths, Volumes 1 and 2 Lab work without the flask-washing; petri-dish cultures without the goop. The two CDs each feature a pair of scientific what-dunnits with six different outcomes. Why did everyone at a biotech company's picnic get sick: The gelatin dessert? The potato salad? Did someone say something about bubonic plague? The mysteries hook you, and before you know it, you've learned something new. *{Videodiscovery, $60 each, ages 12–adult}*

Freddi Fish and the Case of the Missing Kelp Seeds Lovingly hand-drawn animation distinguishes this undersea treasure-hunt from the storybook competition. The aquatic protagonists swim with a fluidity that's rare in the herky-jerky multimedia realm. Do they actually teach "basic problem-solving skills"? I'm not sure. But they provide a charming story, set to rich music, in a deeply textured world that gives "immersive" some new dimensions. *{Humongous, $40, ages 3–8}*

CENTRAL CASTING

Mickey and Pluto may be more familiar, but in children's CDs, often the best characters are the **homegrown** ones. Morgan the ape, Freddi Fish and the Dazzeloids all first saw life on the computer screen. Could it be that developers spent their money and time on smart design and careful testing instead of expensive licensing deals?

How the Leopard Got His Spots Rudyard Kipling's "just so" story about a leopard and an Ethiopian discovering camouflage may not teach up-to-date evolutionary science, but so what? The tale's still delightful, the water-color-style illustrations are beguiling, Danny Glover's narration is plummy and hypnotic, and Ladysmith Black Mambazo's choral music provides ethereal atmosphere. *{Microsoft Home, $35, ages 6–10, Windows only}*

Dazzeloids The Mediogre and his Blando Corporation's TV programs are turning people into brain-washed zombies. Better call in the Dazzeloids, the eccentric quartet of superheros who specialize in combating boredom. Rodney Alan Greenblat's irreverent CD-ROM is kids' entertainment with a smash-your-television subtext splattered across its surface—and lovably neurotic twists scattered through its guts. *{Voyager, $40, ages 3–adult}*

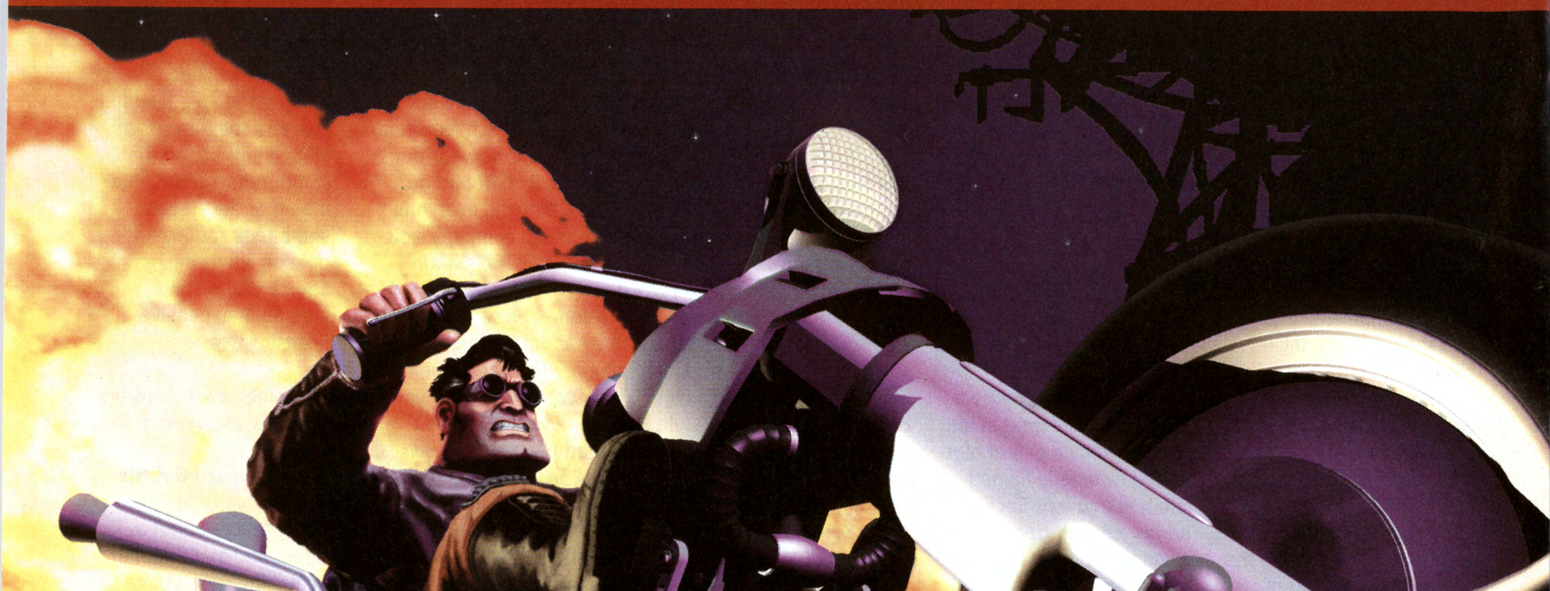
Scott Rosenberg *{scottros @well.com} writes a Digital Culture column for the* San Francisco Examiner.

ART FOR ADULTS

Melancholy Machines

Artist-made CD-ROMs are more often hodgepodges than masterworks; the nonlinear medium forces ideas into fragments. But fragments have always been a native tongue for musician-performance artist **Laurie Anderson**. Her new Puppet Motel *{Voyager, $50, Macintosh only}* joins the very short list of freestanding works of art that could only exist on a computer—and that convey emotion as well as information. Divided into 33 rooms full of monologues, videos, art jokes and a link to a Web site, Puppet Motel deepens Anderson's study of technological language and symbols—and finds a melancholy ache at their heart. When the program drones in an automated voice, "You are out of memory—save now," it's no technical tip; it's a metaphysical lament for lost time.

HE'S OUT TO PROVE HE'S INNOCENT OF MURDER. AND HE'LL KILL ANYONE THAT GETS IN THE WAY.



Full Throttle™ scorches the screen like an exhaust pipe on an exposed leg. You're Ben – deserted, left for dead and framed for murder. You'll do anything to clear your name. Like running big rigs off the road at 100 mph. And if a few butt-ugly bikers get the crap kicked out of them in the process, hey, that's life. It's big bad bikes, big bad gangs in a big bad world. It's Full Throttle. Where the courtroom is the street, and the judge is a tire iron.

FULL THROTTLE

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LUCAS Arts

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Movies By Nikki Finke

Fun and funner: Join Jim Carrey for featherbrained fun at the *Ace Ventura 2* web site this fall.

RIGHT THINK

The Bob Dole Game
It started innocently enough on Prodigy's Movies board. After the Kansas senator gave his anti-Hollywood talk, moderator Digby Diehl asked Dole naysayers and supporters to analyze films as "Friendly to Families" or "Nightmares of Depravity" using his moral viewfinder. "*Species* begins," reviewer John Devon said, "with a government plot to poison a little girl who is imprisoned in a glass cage. Implied domestic violence here." The game went on all summer and still hasn't wound down. Not everyone has liked the board, of course. "Get your left/right butts off the Movie BB!" William Reid exclaimed. Or, get on.

Hollywood Draws an Ace Online

LAST FALL WHEN THE SUITS AT MGM WORRIED THAT THEIR sci-fi flick *Stargate* wouldn't find an audience, two tech-head twentysomethings from Digital Planet, Hollywood's hottest web masters, suggested setting up a web site. That and a seeding campaign helped *Stargate* open to boffo box office. "We went out and found 200 newsgroups that might have something to do with the movie, from rocketry to recreational drugs," laughs Digital Planet's president Joshua Greer.

Now Hollywood studios large and small go online to promote their movies. Yahoo's MovieWeb provides a nifty pipe to Universal, Columbia, TriStar, 20th Century Fox, Walt Disney, New Line, Samuel Goldwyn and Gramercy Pictures. The parent companies of most major studios have their own front-door welcomes, including MCA/Universal's smashing Cyberwalk *{http://www.MCA.com}* and Sony's high-tech gateway *{http://www.sony.com}*. MGM's multimedia page even allows netcruisers to download Quicktime movies and Wham audio players at a reduced fee to enhance the video sneak peeks offered at every movie web site.

At Warner Bros., the entertainers run herd over the programmers. Interactive czar Don Buckley first designed the *Batman Forever* web site *{http://www.batmanforever.com}* with a magic marker on the back of old ad slicks. Then he said, "OK, how do we make this happen?" The result was lively and readable, with bat butler Alfred ready to guide wayward visitors. And at *Batman Forever*'s full-frills Los Angeles premiere, the studio partnered with Nikon to record celebrity arrivals with a digital camera for the web site's Gotham Gallery. On Universal's Cyberwalk, the *Apollo 13* site shows director Ron Howard and star Tom Hanks in a live chat with fans on Prodigy, America Online, CompuServe and, of course, the Net.

Now Playing: Smokin' Jim Carrey and those talking cockroaches

At all the studio web sites, though, wearying download time is a constant complaint among cybervisitors. As one studio executive admitted sheepishly, "Our graphics take so long that I know people who start downloading, go out to dinner and come back only to find it's still not done." Universal, for one, installed hazard signs throughout the Cyberwalk site to ask sightseers if they're sure they want to continue downloading.

More and more, studios find to their amazement that a well-done web site, or something like the standalone AOL pages Paramount prepared for *Congo*, can make even a so-so movie almost reviewer-proof. Though critics weren't wild about Amy and her gold-digging friends, AOL subscribers went ape and the film had a huge opening weekend. (Laughably, a *Waterworld* net game was pitched to MCA early on, but they nixed the idea: "Too much money for this film.")

Even more wham-*bam* on studio web sites is expected this Christmas. Predictions include 3-D action, real-time music and greater use of cybertech programming devices known as HotJava and MUD to make for a more seamless interactive experience.

Then again, sometimes the quirkiest are the best. *Ace Ventura 2* will have a web site soon *{http://www.aceventura2.com}*. And look for a page for next spring's release of *Joe's Apartment*, originally a short film on MTV. The film's talking cockroaches could be as big a cyber-sound hit as the Mac's beloved "burp." Grins Buckley, its page designer, "I think I can't resist."

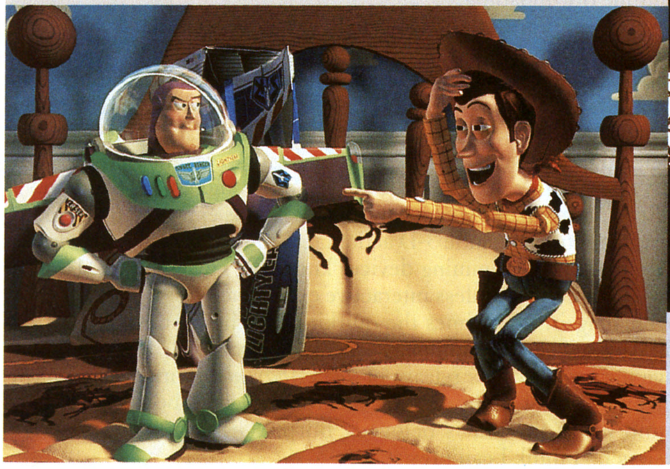
BOB DOLE: MARKOWITZ/SYGMA

Goldeneye Get ready to meet the new James Bond online, as he moves from the cold war to cyberspace. Digital Planet promises the "ultimate Bond experience" web site with a graphic and sound retrospective of Agent 007. "Get me Gates. Bill Gates." *{http://www.mgmua.com/MGM/}*

Clockers Digital Planet is designing a hot site for this Universal movie, based on a novel by Richard Price and directed by Brooklyn's fiery Spike Lee. You can expect to see as many pyrotechnics online as on screen. *{http://www/MCA.com}*

Batman Forever What's new? Ooh la la—Batman goes global! Download the 5.8-megabyte French language promo kit (that's Monsieur le Riddler to you, Buckaroo). Also available in Spanish and Japanese. *{http://www.batmanforever.com}*

Toy Store This computer-animated instant classic from Disney opens this Christmas. Its web site is sure to score high on the "coolness quotient" (and the cuteness scale). Download the 5.5 megabyte video clip already available online. *{http://www.disney.com}*



Jumanji Combine Robin Williams, kids, an ancient magical board game and Sony technology—who cares what the movie's about! State-of-the-art programming and a home version of the game will be ready to download by November. *{http://www.sony.com}*

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you want it

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YOUR GUIDE TO CYBER CULTURE

By Jason Cohen **Music**

In the Pit: In cyberspace nobody can see you mosh, so people still show up for the real thing.

JAY BLAKESBERG

A Whole Lotta Palooza Goin' On

THE FIFTH ANNUAL INCARNATION OF THE Lollapalooza festival wrapped things up in August, but on the Internet the traveling rock'n'roll circus has become something of an ongoing event. This year Lolla was as palpable a presence on the World Wide Web as it was in the fields and amphitheaters, from the day the band line-up was announced to the present moment. Now, the unwashed and iconoclastic masses that come together every summer—a community united by alternative rock and post-punk fashion, by suburban angst, sunstrokes and belly-button rings—have a permanent address *{http://lollapalooza.com}*. Netsurfers can visit the site to simply reexperience the fun, but they've also become an inexorable part of it, uploading their own prose, pictures, videos, drawings and sound clips for a CD-ROM that will be sold exclusively on the Web.

Lollapalooza's immersion in cyberspace is both appropriate and inevitable because the Lolla generation is also the Internet generation. A convenient signifier for the waning culture of alternative rock, the festival is likely to remain an enduring and influential symbol. Perry Farrell, founder of Lollapalooza, has always championed a multifarious (and multimedia) vision, to the point where the standard relationship between reality and virtuality is thoroughly ambiguous. Lollapalooza is like cyberspace in reverse—the physical manifestation of the event reflecting online sensibilities, instead of the other way around.

Flesh & Blood: The alternative rock scene has turned online life inside out.

In practice, this reversal hasn't always made much sense. In past years Lolla organizers needlessly brought the living room to the concert space, providing communal versions of solitary activities and technological attractions that could have just as easily surfaced at a trade show. In 1993 they set up a kiosk of Macs where fest-goers could have online conversations—with people who were standing right next to them. The level of discourse was familiar to any casual rock'n'roll newsgroup reader, with comments like "Alice in Chains rules!" being the norm. In '94, one of Paul Allen's many companies, Interval Research, sponsored the "Electric Carnival," where more than 20,000 people subjected themselves to computer morphing magic. The tent was an ideal venue for concertgoers seeking to avoid both music and interpersonal relations.

The web site has upped the practicality stakes. The site didn't always deliver everything promised, for a most mundane real-world reason: The harried festival staff couldn't always keep up Web maintenance when they also had a show to put on. *Spin* magazine also trumped Lolla's own cybercoverage regularly in its America Online area, which featured ongoing dish and intimately familiar tour diaries from the likes of Sonic Youth and Beck. After the tour got under way, visitors to the

LINER NOTES

Remote Control

Got an hour to kill? Try downloading an **Elvis Costello** song at 28.8 kbps. Sure, it's an article of cyberfaith that someday we'll retrieve entire CDs in mere minutes, along with printable (assuming paper still exists) artwork, lyrics and liner notes. But until then there's **Voyager CDLink,** software that skips the bandwidth logjam by combining online enhancements with the compact discs you already own (a CD-ROM drive is also required). Now, when you visit a Web site that employs CDLink, you'll find the usual graphics and writing hooked up to stereo sound samples that your computer will grab right from your drive. So if you're reading an essay on **R.E.M.'s** *Automatic for the People,* you'll be able to click and hear music from it as you go, with no waiting time or subpar sound problems. Voyager touts the software as a "killer app." Despite the hype, a decoder ring linked to **Frank Zappa's** album *Hot Rats* is intriguing. Bands, record companies, magazines and fans—anyone who wants to make a page—can incorporate the program into their design, opening up wider audio/hypertext connections. The software is free as long as users register with Voyager; the company is keeping a hot-linked directory of all the sites where CDLink is used. For now, such artists as **Miles Davis,** the Rolling Stones, Portishead and Cypress Hill are among those featured. Check it out at *http://www.voyagerco. com/cdlink/cdlink.html.*

web site could access daily concert reports, biographical band information, photos, backstage gossip, and updated scheduling and programming info that proved particularly useful this year, what with Sinead O'Connor dropping out and Elastica losing its bass player. There were also frequent online conferences and interviews, an area for fans to send email to the bands and a strong focus on the non-musical attractions.

At the actual shows, cyberspace lingered as an overall social-aesthetic subtext. This year's tour was a stellar musical showcase, from the crowd-pleasing raps of Cypress Hill to the post-modernist art-rock strain that ran from Sonic Youth on down to Pavement and The Jesus Lizard. But Lollapalooza is as much about the event as the music. For most kids, it's a chance to get some sun, see friends, hear bands, chug down smart drinks, and check out underground artworks and experimental films featured in The Mindfield exhibition, or listen to the local poets and musicians at work on The Lab stage. It beats hanging out in front of the 7-Eleven or getting bleary-eyed staring at a web browser.

Funnily enough, Lollapalooza itself is just like its web page. You bounce around from spot to spot, picking out whatever pleases you and hooking up with others, depending on your taste in art, music or politics. The web page is no substitute for the event itself, but it does expand, compress and nurture a diverse community of fans, kids, musicians and artists. If life is not lived entirely on the Net, the intersection of the two realities is getting larger, and the result can be satisfying both as superficial entertainment and as something truly creative.

The future of rock'n'roll, and of most popular culture, lies not in a world where simulation and machines replace reality but rather, as has always been the case with art and technology, a world of spatial shifts. Flesh-and-blood expression lies on a fluid continuum with abstract progress and newfangled communication—merging and reflecting into something brand new. It's almost certain that we'll be able to watch Lollapalooza live on the Web next year, but at the same time that won't keep anyone from showing up in person.

USABLE MUSIC

Hear It, Print It, Play It

Educational value usually lags behind entertainment when it comes to music CD-ROMs. Which isn't to say there's anything wrong with a Queensryche video game, but **Music Pen's** classical discs dare to deliver serious functionality for composers, musicians and armchair buffs alike. The company plans to release 70 CDs—for less than $10 each—in the **Laser Light CD+ROM** series, which offers symphonies and concertos from the likes of Beethoven, Bach, Dvořak and Chopin. Pop one into your drive and you'll get the complete score, fully synchronized to the music track and easy to print out. It includes historical and biographical information and additional video footage (so you can soak up the ambience of, say, Salzburg while listening to Mozart). Good thing most classical music is in the public domain—you just know they didn't have "future media" clauses in the 17th century.

Hyper-Connectivity

The basic magic of the Web is that if you've got an address for one page you've probably got one for a thousand. When it comes to music, this truism is borne out with scads of sites that branch out among every genre in the audible spectrum.

American Megamix A slew of heavily linked directory style pages serve as byways to hundreds of radio stations, record companies, tour information sources and individual band pages. One of the best is the **Web Wide World of Music,** an opinionated and jam-packed site brought to you by the American Recordings label. *{http://american.recordings.com/wwwofmusic/index.html}*

German Obsession If you're looking for something a bit more idiosyncratic, try **Per's record collection.** This is exactly what it sounds like—a list of all the records owned by some guy in Germany. The collection is pedestrian at best, but Per thoughtfully provides links to the home pages of the bands, if they have one. Now you can finally locate that Toto site you've been missing. *{http://knud.ruc.dk/~perhans/index.htmd/plader.html}*

Homegrown Fanzine People like Per are the best defense against the commercialization of the Net. Homemade sites are always more creative and useful than official ones. Courtney Love fans who visit the **Hole** page will find an impoverished collection of photos, sound clips and biographical information. But over at **tHE DrOwN SoDa HoLe WeB PaGEs,** the meticulous work of a very dedicated fanatic, you'll find all that stuff and more. The discography alone is almost book-length, and it has links to lots of other sites, including the **alt.fan.courtney-love FAQ page,** where you'll find a complete set of Hole lyrics and nomenclature, plus the collected Net postings of Ms. Love herself. Besides, it just sounds like more fun to go to *http: //www.albany.net/~rsmith /hole.html* than to *http://www. geffen.com.*

Ubiquitous Technology You still need a CD-ROM drive and a computer to take advantage of the interactive content that comes with records, but suddenly it's hard to find a record that doesn't offer some of it. The so-called **CD-plus**—more than a record, but less than a CD-ROM—generally tacks on lyrics, video clips and an interview with the artist. Among the throng: Sugar, Bush and even Michael Jackson.

Jason Cohen *{sqwubbsy@aol. com.} writes for* Rolling Stone *and* Texas Monthly. *He is based in Austin, Texas.*

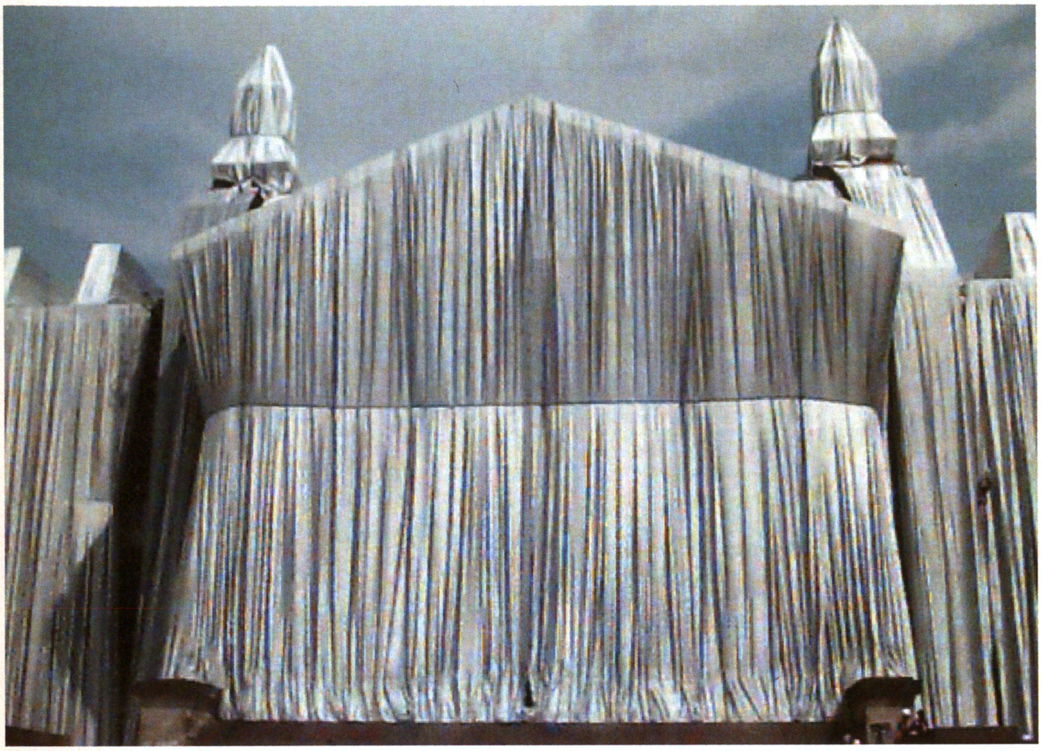
HOT RECORD

In Their Own Spin Cycle

Sonic Youth: *Washing Machine* (DGC). A decade ago, Sonic Youth's sleek guitar dissonance and icy Neuromancer noisescapes were the sound of the future. If Nirvana was post-punk's revolutionaries, then the Sonics authored the manifesto, leaving them in a tricky subcultural position—it's hard to be progressive when you've already been prescient. Since 1988's masterful *Daydream Nation,* the Sonics have never quite surpassed or reinvented themselves. But even so, on *Washing Machine* the band is as sleek, sharp and tightly wound as ever, from **Kim Gordon's** gritty art-blues jerking to the album's close "Diamond Sea," which goes from wistful to cool to complete black-hole noise in, oh, a mere 17 minutes. In a time when no rock club, radio station or MTV program-block is free of the dynamic aggression and pop-structured chaos that Sonic Youth originally wrought, *Washing Machine* is an apt reminder that sometimes it's good to have the prototype model around, especially if they're available to headline Lollapalooza, a move that gave the festival much-needed shots of historical resonance and recharged adventurousness. Sonic Youth is still the best Sonic Youth-influenced band around.

KIM GORDON: JOHN POPPLEWELL/RETNA: COURTNEY LOVE: KARL GEHRING/LGI

By Kay Larson



That's a Wrap: Virtual culture vultures watched the shiny, silver veil drop on the Reichstag.

Springtime for Christo in Germany

IT'S HARD TO LOVE A FORMER NAZI HEADQUARTERS. But when "environmental wrappers" Christo and his wife Jeanne Claude brought their art workers to the Reichstag in Berlin, something glorious happened. This year, June 17–23, cranes lifted rolls of aluminized fabric to the four-story roof, and helpers unfurled the shiny sheets, draping the dark, brooding building from head to toe in billowing veils of silver, as though drab Cinderella had just donned her ball gown. On hand were three friends of the Christos: Jok Church, Adam Ciesielski and Von Wall, website experts from northern California. Their lovingly transcribed daily account of the "Wrapped Reichstag" divides images into two categories: "Daily Digital Photos" and "Regular Old Chemical Photos."

They could have said "boring old chemical photos." Antique technologies—120- and 35-millimeter cameras—produced pictures as drab as the evil stepsisters. The organizers know it; they almost apologize. By contrast, the "Daily Digitals" were shot with a new wide-angle lens on Apple's QuickTake 150 digital camera, then uploaded to a file server using Internet access supplied by Contrib.Net-Berlin. Going from pixels to pixels is clearly the method of choice. The digital images picked up the gleam of the fabric and converted it into phosphor monitor glow, a direct transposition that conveys the ghostly thrill of being there: the scale, the drama and the crowds (some five million, it's said). Lest we think the difference is accidental, two earlier Christo projects on the same home page—"The Running Fence: Sonoma and Marin Counties, 1972–76" and "The Umbrellas: Japan-USA, 1984–91"—had to go the old chemical route, and they suffer just as badly.

Daily Digitals: Photos of the wrap captured the excitement of being there.

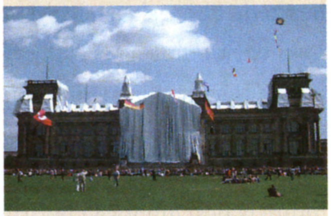
The three have created an object lesson in how to put art on the Net. The site *{http://www.nbn.com:80/youcan/christo/}* is organized like a long letter home, with daily diary entries, weather reports and offhand observations the writers insist are their own. (Official facts and figures have a separate address.)

Christo proposed wrapping the Reichstag in 1971. By now, he's probably glad the bureaucrats forced him to wait. A quarter of a century later, the fabrics are shinier, the digital technologies sparkle, the wall is gone, and Germany leads a revitalized Europe. The Reichstag was due for a new dress.

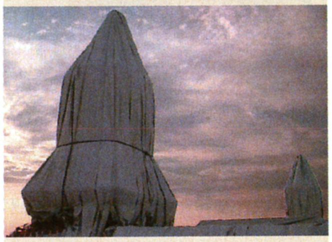
The classic Napoleonic conception of the museum was designed for paintings. But on the Net, the flick of a digital shutter effortlessly rewards non-traditional media by recreating them as events. In the theatre of the real, the walls have fallen from around the global museum.

ART GALLERY

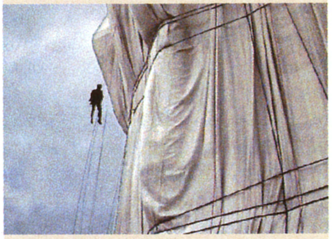
Pixels to Pixels



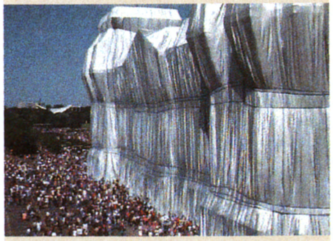
Day 3: Bolts of fabric, anchored to protective scaffolding, are poised on the roof. An artist has strung flags of the world on a wire and flown them under a helium balloon.



Day 5: A tower, swathed in its high-tech costume, aims its nose into the sunset, strangely resembling a 100-year update of one of Monet's Impressionist haystacks.



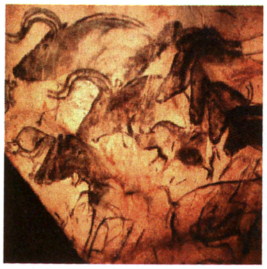
Day 7: A worker performs a high ballet while securing ropes across the billowing face of the front pediment. It could be any mountain cliff, anywhere.



Day 8: The crowds gathering at the Reichstag's silver skirts bring a friendly human dimension to a building with a troubled past.

The Fine Art of the Web

Converting great art to pixels isn't for the faint-hearted. The task can leave museum-types in a quandary. Ignoring that the Net is the great communicator, museums only push memberships and give travel directions online. Once in a while, something grander occurs. Often the future is best glimpsed by artists or interested individuals using the online tool for their own purposes. Some of the brighter sites follow.



The Cave at Vallon-Pont-d'Arc (Ardèche) The Net eyes the Paleolithic. A French archeological guard and two volunteers slipped through a narrow passageway at the back of a minor cave in the Ardèches gorges in southern France last Christmas. They dropped into spectacular galleries of 20,000-year-old art. Cave-bear bones mingle in the mud with the ancient artists' footprints. Described by the French Ministry of Culture, Heritage Department. *{http://www.culture.fr:80/culture/gvpda-en.htm}*

Jenny Holzer Artist Jenny Holzer's home page is called "ada in flux, an evolving journey." Holzer is known for "truisms," bleakly funny one-liners such as: "Abuse of power comes as no surprise." Vote for the ones you like: "Hiding your motives is despicable," or the anthem of the Internet, "Humanism is obsolete." Overall, it's a beautifully organized vision of a slightly skewed, slightly paranoid Information America, offering "information cultivation and extraction" for our "maximum security society." Holzer and friends call ada's page an "experience of transversal, vector, or drift." Sure, why not? *{http://adaweb.com:80/}*

Sistine Chapel Remember those bad movies of Michelangelo dangling from scaffolding under the Sistine's ceiling while paint drips in his eyes? That's why armchair viewing is advisable. The Christus Rex web site, developed by Michael Olteanu, offers 325 JPEG snapshots of segments from the Creation to the Last Judgment. On a system with a high-end video card, they are spectacular; on your average PC they're not viewable. Imagine the conversion problem: water color to silver emulsion to digital hallucination. Michelangelo's frescos become fiery comets of electronic vapors. *{http://www.christusrex.org/}*

Smithsonian Institution Check into the "Electronic Smithsonian" and the path heads in many directions. See especially the What's New section, though some subheads weren't filled in as of this writing. An automated slide show runs you through the Smithsonian museums. One route leads to temporary online exhibitions. Another enters the Smithsonian Institution itself, connecting to places, people, activities, resources and products. *{http://www.si.edu:80/}*

Ocean Planet A watery-blue glide through fragile ecosystems in some of the loneliest, most heartrending places on earth, this is a superb version of a NASA exhibition at the Museum of Natural History in Washington. *{http://seawifs.gsfc.nasa.gov/ocean_planet.html}*

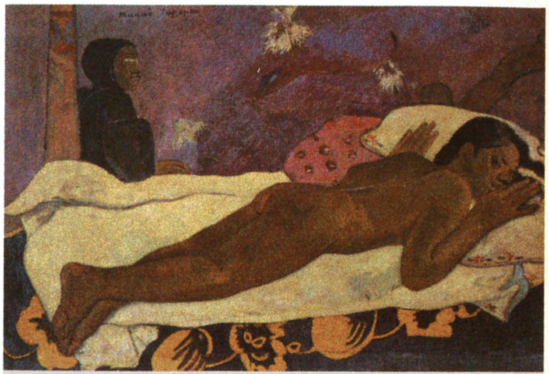
National Museum of American Art The nation's first federal art museum, the National Museum of American Art, has a tour nearly as sophisticated as the Smithsonian's. Dip into some of the 37,000 objects, review the museum's publications, or view exhibitions, such as the White House Collection of American Crafts, with Hillary Rodham Clinton as your guide. *{http://www.nmaa.si.edu:80}*

Los Angeles County Museum of Art/LACMAweb Typical of better-developed museum sites, this one lists exhibitions, press releases and shopping access. It also promises future artist-interviews on video, samples of poetry and music from LACMA programs, and online exhibition catalogs. Another useful feature is the access port to other museums on the Web. *{http://www.lacma.org/}*

Louvre Perhaps the most evolved museum site, the nexus of a growing WebMuseum network, the Louvre offers several online exhibitions: the medieval illustrated manuscript of the Duc de Berry, Gothic art and Cézanne, which indexes to Impressionism. Add a lovely guided tour of Gauguin in Tahiti (see sidebar), plus a Famous Paintings section. Tour the city of Paris from several angles, visiting monuments and landmarks. Like some of the better sites, the Louvre offers a portal to other museums. *{http://www.cnam.fr/wm/}*

Field Museum of Natural History Dinosaurs go digital in a great site for kids. It's a thrill when the screen paints a Triassic monster in the colors of the undead. If you're tired of tyrant lizards, other attractions are here. *{http: //www.bvis.uic.edu:80/museum/Home.html}*

Kay Larson *{virtcity@aol.com} is an independent art critic and curator.*



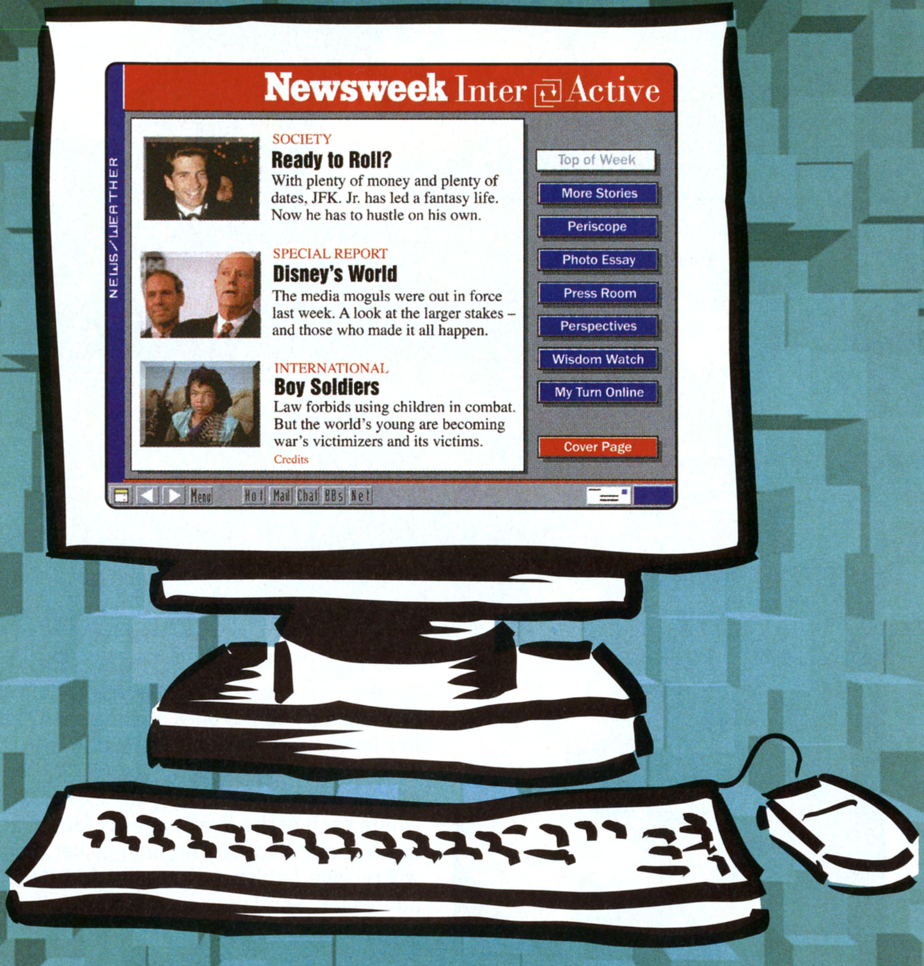
The Work of Art in the Age of Electronic Reproduction
The WebMuseum has one advantage over conventional photo-reproduction of art works: Nobody can mistake the phosphor glow of the monitor for the real object. Art online racks up other points, too: a certain pixilated intensity, a keyed-up textural richness, built of thousands of points of light. And, of course, ease of access. Tune in the handy little Louvre tour, and you can zoom in on **Gauguin's** *Spirit of the Dead Watching*, its Tahitian ghost-in-the-wall now wreathed in cathode rays. *{http://www.cnam.fr/wm/paint/auth/gauguin/}*

ARTISTS' OUTREACH

A Page of Their Own

Could the virtual gallery be more egalitarian than the commercial kind? The women who loaded their work into **The World's Women On-Line!** probably think so. The exhibition honors the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing, China, from August 30 to September 15, 1995. Invited by the Institute for Studies in the Arts at Arizona State University, hundreds of women either uploaded their work directly to the site or mailed in images for conversion. They come from the U.S., France and Japan, but also Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, China, Australia and Costa Rica—fulfilling the worldwide promise of easy access to one another over vast distances. The site organizer, whose purple-blue video prefaces the home page, is "new media" artist Muriel Magenta. *{http://www.asu. edu:80/wwol/}*

JUST A YEAR OLD AND ALREADY THE MOST ADVANCED IN ITS CLASS.


Newsweek Inter Active
NEWS/WEATHER
Top of Week
More Stories
Periscope
Photo Essay
Press Room
Perspectives
Wisdom Watch
My Turn Online
Cover Page
Menu
Hot
Mail
Chat
BBs
Net

SOCIETY
Ready to Roll?
With plenty of money and plenty of dates, JFK. Jr. has led a fantasy life. Now he has to hustle on his own.

SPECIAL REPORT
Disney's World
The media moguls were out in force last week. A look at the larger stakes – and those who made it all happen.

INTERNATIONAL
Boy Soldiers
Law forbids using children in combat. But the world's young are becoming war's victimizers and its victims.
Credits

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Quote: USA Today, November 10, 1994

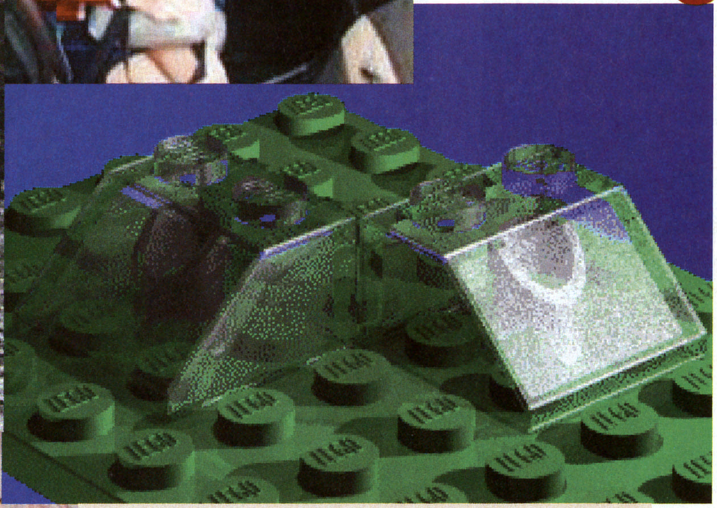
Newsweek Inter Active

Where are you in the Virtual City?

1

2

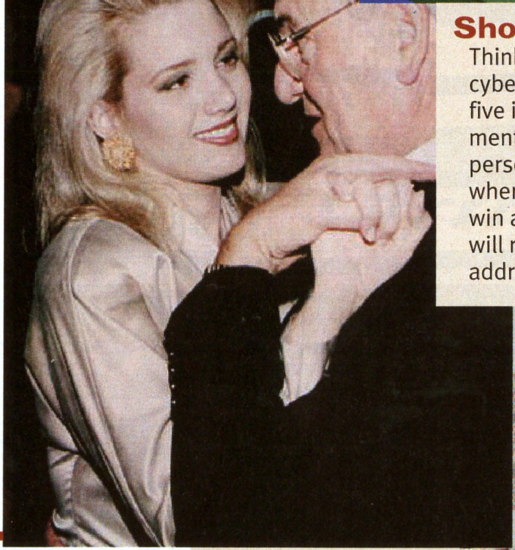
3



Show Off Your Street Smarts

Think you know the main streets and dark alleys of cyberspace like the back of your hand? Prove it. The five images shown here are all from Web pages mentioned in this issue of *Virtual City*. Be the first person to correctly identify the exact URL addresses where each of the five images is found, and you'll win a cool *Virtual City* bomber jacket. Runners up will receive T-shirts personalized with their email addresses. Send your entries to ***virtcity@aol.com***.

4



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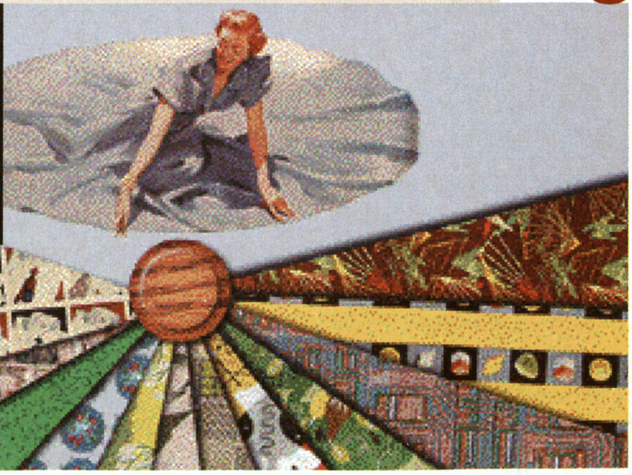

COMPETITION RULES: No purchase necessary. Entries must be sent by email to *virtcity@aol.com*, and must state the contestant's name, address and telephone number, and identify the sites shown in this issue's installment of "Where Are You in the Virtual City?" First prize will go to the first contestant who identifies the most sites correctly, including the full URL addresses of the pages where the images reside. Entries must be received by November 15, 1995. The "Where Are You in the Virtual City" contest is not open to employees of Virtual Communications, Newsweek Inc., contributors to Virtual City, and the families of any of the above.

Edited by Cathy Davies

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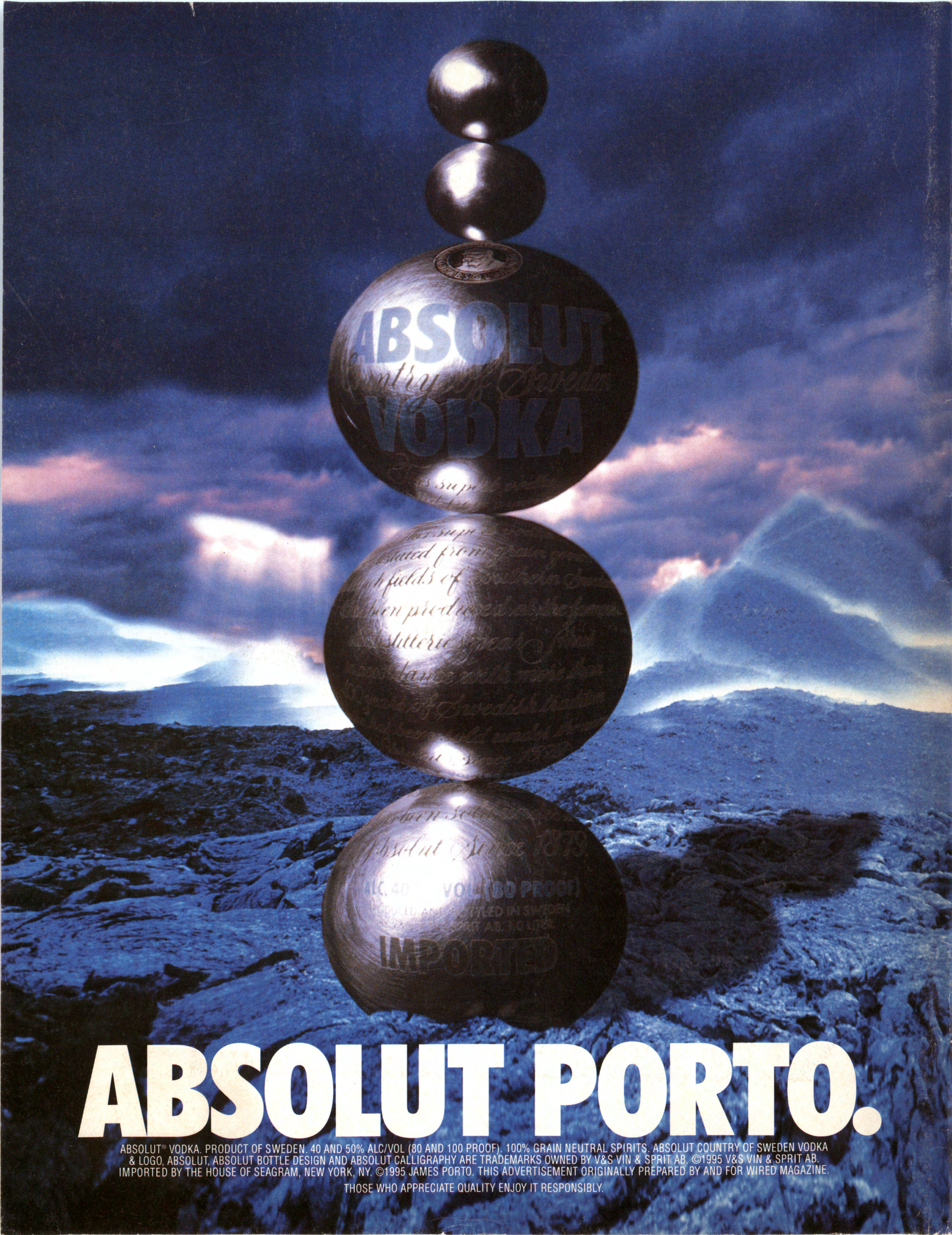
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